

THE
HISTORY
OF
AMERICAN SLAVERY AND METHODISM,
FROM 1780 TO 1849:
OR,
METHODISM
AND HISTORY
OF THE
WESLEYAN METHODIST CONNECTION
OF AMERICA;
IN TWO PARTS,
WITH AN APPENDIX.
By LUCIUS C. MATLACK.

PART FIRST.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE subject presented in this volume, is, the connection of Slavery with, and its influence upon, the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States. This denomination was the largest in the country, but the anti-slavery agitation, has resulted in its dismemberment, and the organization of other religious bodies, one of which embraces about half its former strength.

A narrative of facts is here given, embracing the early introduction of slavery into the church—its successive innovations—the efforts of abolitionists to oppose its inroads—the opposition to those efforts, by the high and low judicatories, and individual authorities of the church—with the results, following the agitation, produced by those who labored to promote the cause of emancipation.

The narrative will be extended to the year 1842, with a full detail of the facts relating to slavery, and its connection with the church. After that period, a general statement only, of the most important facts will be given, yet so as to present a correct view of the whole subject.

The character and design of this part of the volume, is now fully before the reader. The field of observation therein presented, abounds with objects of interest. That attention has been directed to them in the best manner, is not affirmed. The volume such as it is, is submitted to the public. The merit to be attached to the work will not be enhanced by any commendatory remarks from the author.

It is however a satisfaction to him to be able to furnish the following commendation from the late General Conference of the Wesleyan Connection.

"Your Committee, to whom was referred the manuscript of the 'History of American Slavery and Methodism,' have reviewed the work but partially; but sufficient to recommend the work favorably to this Conference; believing it to be an interesting and important sketch of the rise, progress, and results, of ab. "tionism in the M. E. Church. We are not, however, in favor of its purchase by the Book Concern, under its present embarrassments, but should Bro. Matlack publish it on his own responsibility, we give him this assurance, that we will do in its circulation."

[Signed]

New-York City Oct 9. 1849.

P. M. WAY,
S. SPRAGUE,
A. N. HAMLIN,
MILOW STOW,
ASA WARREN.

AMERICAN SLAVERY AND METHODISM.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL REMARKS—AMERICAN SLAVERY DEFINED—OPINIONS AND ACTIONS OF THE METHODISTS IN EARLY TIMES.

The history of American Slavery is the history of robbery and wrong; a series of outrages upon the rights of man, in defiance of God. Every page of its iniquitous record is stained with blood. Following this monster of iniquity for ages past, there has been heard the deep-toned mutterings of pent-up wrath, and the dismal echo of anguish, extorted from bleeding men, broken-hearted women, and worse than orphan children. Millions who in slavery pine, are crying for deliverance. Their cry may be unheeded by the merciless oppressor, but it has entered the ear of the Almighty. "*Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.*" "*I have heard their cry. I know their sorrows.*" "*I will come down and deliver them.*"

The obstacles in the way of their deliverance, arise from two sources—the rigorous enactments of civil legislation, and the love of domination which pervades most of the ecclesiastical bodies of the land. The latter have power to control and reform the action of the former, if their power was directed to this result, by a faithful enforcement of the principles of righteousness and truth. But their course on the question of delivering the captive, and opening the prison doors to them that are bound, indicates a forgetfulness of the injunction: "*Remember those who are in bonds as bound with them.*" It gives evidence, further, of a serious delinquency that is fatal to their claim to Christian character. For, it is signif-

icantly inquired in the sacred volume, "*How dwelleth the love of God in him?*" "*who shutteth up the bowels of compassion from his brother in need?*" And who are more needy than the poor perishing slaves!

To the purification of the professed Christian church, then, are we to look, as the first efficient step in the work of reform. How this may best be accomplished, can be more readily ascertained by considering, in the first place, the character of the connection between it and slavery. True to the design of the work now in hand, the attention of the reader is only solicited to a narrative of the commencement, continuance and consequences of the connection between the Methodist Episcopal Church and American Slavery!

And what is American slavery? It is the condition of those of our species who are held and treated in this country as property. In South Carolina, they are thus described:

"Slaves shall be deemed, sold, taken, reputed and adjudged in law to be *chattels, personal, in the hands of their owners and possessors*, and their executors, administrators, and assigns, *to all intents, constructions and purposes whatsoever.*"

The law of Louisiana declares:

"A slave is one who is in the power of the master to whom he belongs. The master may *sell him, dispose of his person, his industry and labor; he can do nothing, possess nothing, nor acquire anything, but what must belong to his master.*"

An act of the State of Maryland declares slaves to be *property*, in these words:

"In case the personal property of a ward shall consist of specific articles such as **SLAVES, WORKING BEASTS, ANIMALS OF ANY KIND, stock, furniture, plate, books, &c.**, the court, if it shall deem it advantageous for the ward, may, at any time, pass an order for the sale thereof."

An act of the State of Louisiana declares:

"Slaves shall always be reputed and considered *real estate*; shall be, as such, subject to be mortgaged, according to the rules prescribed by law, and they shall be seized and sold as *real estate.*"

Hence it appears, that the distinguishing principle of slavery is this: slaves are not to be ranked among rational, immortal beings,

but they are to be *considered, held and treated as things, as articles of property.*

Nothing further is necessary, to give a full description of the enormity of that system of which John Wesley spake almost with his dying breath, when he declared "AMERICAN SLAVERY THE VILEST THAT EVER SAW THE SUN."

In view of this opinion, we should expect to find the people of which John Wesley was the founder, among the first opponents of the system, and uncompromising in their hostility to it. And such was the fact.

Wesleyan Methodism was introduced into this country in the year 1766, by a small number of pious emigrants from Ireland, who were members of a Methodist society in their own land. The first preachers sent over from England by Mr. Wesley's authority, were Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor. They arrived October 24, 1769. The first Conference held, was in the year 1773, July 4, at Philadelphia. In May of the two years following, the Annual Conference was held, at the same place. The following year it was held at Baltimore. In 1777, the Conference met in Hartford County, Maryland, and in 1778 at Leesburg, Va. During the year 1779, two Conferences were held, the one in Virginia, the other in Maryland; but the question of slavery is not noticed in the minutes of either of these several sessions.

But what their sentiments were, may be known from the course pursued by individual ministers—the subsequent action of the Conference—and the well known opinions of FRANCIS ASBURY, who is called the Apostle of American Methodism.

Of the many individual instances among Methodist preachers of direct testimony against slavery, by emancipating the slaves in their possession, the following case is selected.

FREEBORN GARRETSON was one of the earliest Methodist preachers, and the companion of Asbury. He entered the travelling ministry in 1776. During the previous year his mind was deeply exercised on religious matters. The following extract from his Life by Nathan Bangs, D. D., will show how he was relieved from his mental distress, and what were his opinions of slavery:

"I arose from the earth, and advancing towards the house in deep thought, I came to this conclusion, that I would exclude myself from the society of men, and live in a cell upon bread and water, mourning out my days for having grieved my Lord. I went into my room and sat in one position till nine o'clock. I then threw myself on the bed, and slept till morning. Although it was the Lord's day, I did not intend to go to any place of worship; neither did I desire to see any person, but wished to pass my time away in total solitude. I continued reading the Bible till eight, and then, under a sense of duty, called the family together for prayer. As I stood with a book in my hand, in the act of giving out a hymn, this thought powerfully struck my mind; 'It is not right for you to keep your fellow creatures in bondage; you must let the oppressed go free.' I knew it was that same blessed voice which had spoken to me before—till then, I had never suspected that the practice of slave-keeping was wrong; I had not read a book on the subject, nor been told so by any—I paused a minute, and then replied, 'Lord, the oppressed shall go free.' And I was as clear of them in my mind, as if I had never owned one. I told them they did not belong to me, and that I did not desire their services without making them a compensation: I was now at liberty to proceed in worship. After singing, I kneeled to pray. Had I the tongue of an angel, I could not fully describe what I felt: all my dejection, and that melancholy gloom which preyed upon me, vanished in a moment; a divine sweetness ran through my whole frame. It was God, not man, that taught me the impropriety of holding slaves: and I shall never be able to praise him enough for it. My very heart has bled, since that, for slaveholders, especially those who make a profession of religion; for I believe it to be a crying sin."

To this may be added the testimony of Bishop Asbury, extracted from his Journals, under the dates affixed to each paragraph.

"1776. After preaching at the Point, I met the class and then the black people, some of whose unhappy masters forbid their coming for religious instruction. How will the sons of oppression answer for their conduct, when the great Proprietor of all shall call them to account! — Vol. 1, p. 289.

"1780. Spoke to some select friends about slave-keeping, but they could not bear it; this I know, God will plead the cause of the oppressed, though it gives offence to say so here. O Lord, banish the INFERNAL SPIRIT OF SLAVERY from thy dear Zion.

"Lord, help thy people; there are many things which are painful to me, but cannot yet be removed, especially slave-keeping and

its attendant circumstances. The Lord will certainly hear the cries of the oppressed, *naked, starving* creatures. O, my God ! think on this land. Amen.—*Ib. p. 293.*

“ I am grieved to see slavery and the manner of keeping these poor people.

“ 1783. We all agreed (at the Virginia Conference) in the spirit of African liberty, and strong testimonies were borne in its favor at our love-feast.—*Ib. pp. 295, 356.*

“ I pity the poor slaves. O that God would look down in mercy and take their cause in hand.—*Ib. p. 375.*

“ 1785. At the Virginia Conference he says:—I found the minds of the people greatly agitated with our rules against slavery, and a proposed petition to the general assembly for the emancipation of the blacks. Col. —— and Dr. Coke disputed on the subject, and the Colonel used some threats ; next day brother O’Kelly let fly at them, and they were made angry enough ; we, however, came off with whole bones.—*Ib. p. 384.*

“ We waited on General Washington, who received us very politely, and gave us his opinion against slavery.—*Ib. p. 385.*

“ 1787. Rode to Brother Johnson’s. Without the labor of slaves, he manages to have abundance for man and beast.—*Vol. 2, p. 11.*

“ 1788. *Virginia.*—Other persuasions are less supine ; and their ministers boldly preach against the freedom of slaves. Our brother Everett, with no less zeal and boldness, cries aloud for liberty and emancipation.

“ 1798. My mind is much pained. O ! to be dependent on slaveholders is in part to be a slave, and I was free born. I am brought to conclude that slavery will exist in Virginia perhaps for ages ; there is not *a sufficient sense of religion nor liberty to destroy it.* I judge, in after ages, it will be so that poor men and free men will not live among slaveholders, but will go to new lands ; they only who are concerned in and dependent on them, will stay in old Virginia.

“ On Saturday I had a close conversation with some of our local ministry. We were happy to find seven out of ten were not in the spirit or practice of slavery.

“ I assisted Philip Sands to draw up an agreement for our officiary to sign against slavery. Thus we may know the real sentiments of our local preachers. It appears to me, *that we can never fully reform the people, until we reform the preachers*—and that hitherto, except purging the travelling connection, we have been working at the wrong end. But, if it be lawful for local preachers to hold slaves, then it is lawful for travelling preachers also ; and they

may keep plantations and overseers upon their quarters ; but this *reproach of inconsistency must be rolled away.*

"South Carolina, 1801. A Solomon Reeves let me know that he had seen the Address signed by me ; and was quite confident there were no arguments to prove that slavery was repugnant to the spirit of the gospel !—What absurdities will not men defend ! If the gospel will tolerate slavery, what will it not authorize ? I am strangely mistaken if this said Mr. Reeves has more grace than is necessary, or more of Solomon than the name.—*Ib. p. 15.*

"Joseph Ballard and his wife are gone to rest. John Perry, a pious soul, is also gone to his reward. Neither he nor Ballard were slaveholders. Hail, happy souls ?—*Ib. p. 18.*

"1810. We have hard labor and suffering. I do not dare to complain, when I see the wretched fate of the poor Africans in slavery.—*Ib. p. 300.*

"1814. *Georgia.*—Away with the false cant, that the better you use the negroes, the worse they will use you ! Make them good ; then, teach them the fear of God, and learn to fear Him yourselves, ye masters ! I understand not the doctrine of cruelty. As soon as the poor Africans see me, they spring with life to the boat, and make a heavy flat skim along like a light canoe ; poor starved souls—God will judge !—*Ib. p. 376.*

At the Conference of 1780, the following action was had on the subject of slavery. It is in the primitive Wesleyan form of questions and answers :—

"Question 16.—Ought not this Conference to require those travelling preachers who hold slaves to give promises to set them free ?

"Answer.—Yes.

"Question 17.—Does this Conference acknowledge that slavery is contrary to the laws of God, man and nature, and hurtful to society ; contrary to the dictates of conscience and pure religion, and doing that which we would not others should do to us and ours ? Do we pass our disapprobation on all our friends who keep slaves, and advise their freedom ?

"Answer.—Yes."

The following rule was adopted in 1783 respecting slaveholding :

"Question.—What shall be done with our local preachers who hold slaves contrary to the laws which authorize their freedom in any of the United States ?

"Answer.—We will try them another year. In the mean time let every assistant deal faithfully and plainly with every one, and report to the next Conference. It may then be necessary to suspend them."

In 1784, it was determined by a resolution of the Conference to execute these rules on slavery, except (!) in Virginia. All buying

and selling of slaves, except to free them, was forbidden. They declared that if "Any bought with no other design than to hold them as slaves, and had been previously warned, they shall be expelled, and permitted to sell on no consideration."

Of local preachers who refused to manumit their slaves, where the laws admitted it, they said, "Try those in Virginia another year, and suspend the preachers in Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania and New Jersey." And travelling preachers every where, who refused to emancipate, they would "employ them no more."

Besides the above, the following questions and answers form a part of the proceedings, and were printed in the first book of Discipline :—

"Question 42.—What methods can we take to extirpate slavery?"

"Answer.—We are deeply conscious of the impropriety of making new terms of communion for a religious society already established, except on the most pressing occasion; and such we esteem the practice of holding our fellow creatures in slavery. We view it as contrary to the golden law of God, on which hang all the law and the prophets; and the unalienable rights of mankind, as well as every principle of the Revolution, to hold in the deepest abasement, in a more abject slavery than is, perhaps, to be found in any part of the world, except America, so many souls that are all capable of the image of God.

"We therefore think it our most bounden duty to take immediately some effectual method to extirpate this abomination from among us; and for that purpose we add the following to the rules of our society, viz.:—

"1. Every member of our society who has slaves in his possession, shall, within twelve months after notice given to him by the Assistant, (which notice the Assistants are required immediately and without delay to give in their respective circuits,) legally execute and record an instrument, whereby he emancipates and sets free, every slave in his possession—those between the ages of 25 and 45 immediately, or in five years; if between 20 and 25, within ten years; if under 20, at the age of 25 at farthest; and every infant born in slavery after the above mentioned rules are complied with, immediately on its birth.

"2. Every Assistant shall keep a journal, in which he shall regularly minute down the names and ages of all the slaves belonging to all the masters in his respective circuit; and also the date of every instrument executed and recorded for the manumission of the slaves, with the name of the court, book and folio in which the said instruments respectively have been recorded; which journal shall be handed down in each circuit to the succeeding Assistants.

"3. In consideration that these rules form a new term of communion, every person concerned, who will not comply with them, shall have liberty quietly to withdraw himself from our society within the twelve months succeeding the notice given as aforesaid, otherwise the Assistant shall exclude him in the society.

"4. No person so voluntarily withdrawn or so excluded, shall ever partake of the Supper of the Lord with the Methodists, till he complies with the above requisitions.

"5. No person holding slaves shall in future be admitted into society, or to the Lord's Supper, till he previously comply with these rules concerning slavery.

"N. B. These rules are to affect the members of our society no farther than as they are consistent with the laws of the States in which they reside.

"And respecting our friends in Virginia that are concerned, and after due consideration of their peculiar circumstances, we allow them two years from the notice given, to consider the expediency of compliance or non-compliance with these rules.

"Question 43.—*What shall be done with those who buy or sell slaves, or give them away?*

"Answer.—They are immediately to be expelled, unless they buy them on purpose to free them."

This minute on slavery is found in the "History of the Discipline," by Robert Emory, published in 1844 at the M. Episcopal Book Room, New York,—from which the previous facts respecting the Discipline have all been gathered.

Daniel De Vinne, of the New York Conference, in relation to the above, wrote as follows in Zion's Watchman of 1842:—

"Mr. Lee, the southern historian, says:—'These rules gave general offence, and were found to be of difficult execution.'—Bishop Asbury, Jour. vol. I., p. 384, writes in Virginia, 'I found the minds of our people greatly agitated with our rules against slavery, and a proposed petition to the General Assembly for the emancipation of the blacks. Col. —— and Dr. Coke disputed on the subject, and the Col. used some threats; next day, brother O'Kelly let fly at them, and they were angry enough; we, however, came off with whole bones, and our business in Conference was finished in peace.' In this way our fathers opposed slavery, not by quoting scripture to support its 'rightful existence,' or to justify it by the Golden Rule, 'under certain circumstances,' nor yet, by 'wholly refraining from it' while it was annulling marriage and the Sabbath, and spreading moral pollution and desolation over the church and nation. Presenting petitions and preaching against slavery, at that day, did not disturb the church, for the 'Conference finished their business in peace.' The simple truth is, the slave power had not then gained the ascendancy in the church. The church was disturbed because a few slaveholders had brought this crying evil into her border, but she was not disturbed in her council by vigorous means used for its extirpation.

"At the Virginia Conference in 1785, several petitions were presented by some of the principal members, urging the suspension of the rules on slavery; but Dr. Coke and the Conference brought affairs to this issue:—

"That unless the rule against slavery were permitted to operate, preaching should be withdrawn from those circuits and places in which it was too obnoxious to be suffered."

"This decisive course settled the affair, and the preachers were appointed and the rules enforced. This course, however, was soon changed, but it showed that wherever energy was put forth against slavery it has yielded, like other evils."

Six months after these rules were adopted, it was thought necessary to suspend them for a time, by the Conference at Baltimore. The course pursued by Dr. Coke at the Virginia Conference, was not sustained by the action of the body meeting in Baltimore. The Virginia Conference was a convenience merely, and not endowed with power to make or alter particular rules. So says Mr. Jesse Lee.

In the Annual Minutes for 1785, the following note was inserted:—

"It is recommended to all our brethren to suspend the execution of the minute on Slavery, till the deliberations of a future Conference; and that an equal space of time be allowed all our members for consideration, when the minute shall be put in force."

This yielding was yet accompanied by the following spirited declaration:—

"N. B. We do hold in the deepest abhorrence the practice of Slavery, and shall not cease to seek its destruction, by all wise and prudent means."

A specimen of the means made use of is given in Mr. Drew's life of Dr. Coke, page 138. He says:—

"Hitherto, while Dr. Coke had preserved a profound silence on the subject of negro slavery, all were pleased, and he was permitted to go on his way in peace. But, no sooner did he lift up his voice against the injustice of the traffic, than it became the signal for the commencement of hostilities against him. In the province of Virginia, while preaching in a barn, on Sunday the 9th of April, 1785, he took occasion to introduce the subject of slavery, and expatiated on its injustice in terms that were not calculated to flatter his auditors. Many were provoked to hear those truths which,

from their earliest infancy, they had been taught to stifle, and which their interest still instructed them to conceal. A small party, therefore, withdrew from the house and formed a combination to offer him some personal violence as soon as he came out. To persevere in this resolution they were stimulated by a lady, whose fashionable appearance was more conspicuous than either her politeness or humanity. This lady informed the enraged mob that she would give them fifty pounds in case they would seize the preacher and give him one hundred lashes. On leaving the house, Dr. Coke was instantly surrounded by a ferocious party, who began with threats, and proceeded to put these threats into execution. A magistrate, however, who was present, opposed the violence which they menaced, by seizing one who appeared anxious to be foremost. Another who seemed to have more strength, as he evidently had more zeal and courage than religion, was preparing to repel the assailants by giving them battle. This gentleman was a military officer, and sustained the rank of Colonel. Their united influence had a most powerful effect. The most courageous began to be abashed, and marks of timidity were seen in all. They therefore gave vent to their rage in idle threats, and suffered the object of their vengeance to escape without further molestation. But rage and hostility were not the only effects produced by this discourse. The magistrate who had espoused the cause of Dr. Coke, began to view the subject in a more serious light; and to show that he acted from pure principle, immediately emancipated fifteen slaves. The report of his conduct extended the benefit still farther, and induced another to follow his laudable example, and to emancipate eight slaves. And the united example of both, induced another to emancipate one. These effects were instantaneously visible; but to what extent this faithful, but sharp reproof operated in secret, we must not expect fully to know till we enter into the world of spirits."

"At this time, the Conference and Dr. Coke were engaged in a most splendid enterprise. They, however, met with the most powerful opposition and discouragements, yet, in Dr. Coke's Life, page 139, Mr. Drew again writes:

"The injustice of negro slavery, nevertheless, still occupied his thoughts, and at a yearly Conference which was held in this State while he was present, a petition was drawn up, and presented to the Legislative assembly of North Carolina, praying them to pass an act that in a land which boasted of its independence, the slaveholders should at least be permitted to emancipate their slaves, if they deemed it expedient. The petition was signed by the Conference, and sanguine hopes were entertained of its ultimate success, as the

governor was favorable to the measure, and had signified his opinion to Mr. Asbury on a former occasion. But this was not the only State in which interest was found to be too strong for the dictates of humanity and justice. On repairing from North Carolina to the State of Virginia, in which the laws permit the emancipation of the slaves, Dr. Coke again appealed to the dealers of flesh and blood.'

"At the Virginia Conference, a petition was drawn up, praying the Legislature to pass an act for the immediate or gradual emancipation of the slaves, and a copy of it was given to each preacher on his circuit to present for signatures. Many prominent men were in its favor, and sanguine hopes were entertained of its success."

Although the rules of 1784 were suspended in 1785, and never again restored, yet in 1796 the following section was introduced, with the exception of the 2d and 6th answers, which were introduced in 1800.

"**Ques.** What regulations shall be made for the extirpation of the crying evil of African slavery?

"**Ans.** 1. We declare that we are more than ever convinced of the great evil of African slavery, which still exists in these United States, and do most earnestly recommend to the Yearly Conferences, Quarterly Meetings, and to those who have the oversight of Districts and Circuits, to be exceedingly cautious what persons they admit to official stations in our church; and in the case of future admission to official stations, to require such security of those who hold slaves, for the emancipation of them, immediately, or gradually, as the laws of the States respectively, and the circumstances of the case will admit; and we do fully authorize all the Yearly Conferences to make whatever regulations they judge proper, in the present case, respecting the admission of persons to official stations in our church.

"2. When any travelling preacher becomes an owner of a slave, or slaves, by any means, he shall forfeit his ministerial character in our church, unless he executes, if it be practicable, a legal emancipation of such slaves, conformably to the laws of the State in which he lives.

"3. No slaveholder shall be received into society till the preacher who has the oversight of the Circuit, has spoken to him freely and faithfully upon the subject of slavery.

"4. Every member of the society who sells a slave, shall immediately, after full proof, be excluded from the society; and if any member of our society purchase a slave, the ensuing Quarterly Meeting shall determine on the number of years in which the slave so purchased would work out the price of his purchase. And the person so purchasing, shall immediately after such determination, execute a legal instrument for the manumission of such slave at the expiration of the term determined by the Quarterly Meeting. And in default of his executing such instrument of manumission, or on his refusal to submit his case to the judgment of the Quarterly Meeting, such member shall be excluded from the society. Provided also, that in the case of a female slave, it

shall be inserted in the aforesaid instrument of manumission, that all her children who shall be born during the years of her servitude, shall be free at the following times, namely :—every female child at the age of *twenty-one*, and every male child at the age of *twenty-five*. Never theless, if the member of our society, executing the said instrument of manumission, judge it proper, he may fix the times of manumission of the female slaves before-mentioned, at an earlier age than that which is prescribed above.

“ 5. The preachers and other members of our society, are requested to consider the subject of negro slavery with *deep attention*; and that they *impart to the General Conference*, through the medium of the yearly conferences, or otherwise, any important thoughts upon the subject, that the Conference may have full light in order to take further steps toward the eradicating this **ENORMOUS EVIL** from that part of the Church of God to which they are connected.

“ 6. The Annual Conferences are directed to draw up addresses for the gradual emancipation of the slaves, to the legislatures of those States in which no general laws have been passed for that purpose. These addresses shall urge, in the most respectful, but pointed manner, the necessity of a law for the gradual emancipation of the slaves; proper committees shall be appointed by the Annual Conferences, out of the most respectable of our friends, for the conducting of the business: and the presiding elders, elders, deacons, and travelling preachers, shall procure as many proper signatures as possible to the addresses, and give all the assistance in their power, in every respect, to aid the committees, and to further this blessed undertaking. **LET THIS BE CONTINUED FROM YEAR TO YEAR TILL THE DESIRED END BE ACCOMPLISHED.”**

And, that these provisions were complied with, is proven by the testimony of Mr. Samuel Davis, of New York city, who joined the Church in 1789, and resided in the Slave States until 1826. In a letter to Dr. Fisk, published in Zion’s Watchman, dated April 8, 1838, he says :

“ I know it was required of all those who joined our Church, in our district, in those early days of Methodism, that they should execute an instrument of emancipation of all the slaves in their possession, which they had inherited according to their respective ages and circumstances; and if any member had bought, or should buy, for their own use, any slave, a committee was appointed to determine how long the slave should serve, and this committee was regulated in its estimates, by the age, health, and cost of the slave; after which none of those thus emancipated were considered by us as *slaves*.”

“ So universally were these rules attended to, that I never knew but one single instance of any member’s neglecting them, and that was my next neighbor, at whose house our presiding elder called, in the year 1792, on business, with a preacher who was then sta-

tioned there. When the presiding elder was about to retire, the gentleman of the house invited him to stay to dinner, saying, ‘it was almost ready.’ The reply was, ‘I never eat a meal in a Methodist slaveholder’s house, if I know it,’ and he immediately left him. I have heard Bishop Asbury, and many of the early preachers, preach pointedly against slavery. At our Quarterly Meetings, where hundreds of slaveholders were present with their slaves, I have repeatedly heard some of our preachers CONDEMN the PRACTICE of slavery, as a vile SIN against God, *morally, socially,* and politically WRONG; no one interrupting or molesting the man of God. And *I have no doubt had all our ministers done their duty, there would not have been a slave left in this country twenty years ago.* For I know, that about that time and a few years previous, there were hundreds of slaves set free by the members of the Methodist E. Church.”

In 1796, notes on the Discipline were prepared and published at the request of the General Conference. These notes were sanctioned by the same body, in 1800. From a copy now before the writer, the note on the General Rule on Slavery is now copied.

“The buying and selling the souls and bodies of men (for what is the body without the soul but a dead mass?) is a complicated crime. It was, indeed, *in some measure*, overlooked in the Jews, by reason of the wonderful hardness of their hearts, as was the keeping of concubines and divorcing of wives at pleasure; but is totally opposite to the whole spirit of the Gospel. It has an immediate tendency to fill the mind with pride and tyranny, and is frequently productive of almost every act of lust and cruelty which can disgrace the human species. Even the moral philosopher will candidly confess, that if there be a God, every perfection he possesses must be opposed to a practice so contrary to every moral idea which can influence the human mind.

T. COKE,
F. ASBURY.”

Thus we have before us the primitive character of American Methodism; the undisguised sentiments of the first and best men in the Church; and the measures which they deemed “wise and prudent” in seeking its destruction. Those measures were private and public discussion; bold denunciation from the pulpit; Conference action; Church discipline, and finally, an appeal to the civil power, or in other words, political action!

In concluding this chapter, it may be well to give the following summary of facts, furnished in a series of communications in Zion’s Watchman, in 1842, and also in Zion’s Herald, in 1844, from

Daniel De Vinne, a worthy member of the New York Annual Conference of the M. E. Church.

As an introduction to these facts, it may be proper to observe, that the remarks already submitted, show that slavery had become connected with the Church. Slaveholders were church members and ministers. Was it thus from the beginning of Methodism in this country? If not, when was it first introduced? These questions are answered by the above named writer. He says:

"The history of our Church abundantly shows that the first societies were generally formed in cities and villages, and composed of that class whose moderate circumstances kept them, in all probability, from any participation in slavery. For, sixty years ago, before wealth and luxury were so general, slaves were almost exclusively found in the parlors and on the plantations of the wealthy. The precise time, and the first instance in which this evil found its way into our church, cannot be at this period very clearly ascertained; but those do the greatest injustice and dishonor to the head and heart of John Wesley, who assert that it was with his knowledge and approbation. Nothing can be farther from the truth. Previous to the first Conference in 1773, Mr. Wesley could not have exerted much influence over these infant societies, being himself more than three thousand miles from them, and they, in general, composed of only a few individuals in a place, and scattered over the immense territory of the provinces. And in the two years preceding the commencement of the Revolutionary war, nearly all amicable communication was cut off between the two countries. Nor can we find, during this period, one word in reference to the existence of slavery in the American societies, either in his writings or in those of any of his preachers; so that it is wholly begging the question, to assert that there was any slavery in the Methodist societies before the Revolution, much less that it was there with his knowledge and approbation.

"The history of the times, and all the circumstances in the case, are entirely opposed to such a supposition. In 1774, Mr. Wesley published his *Thoughts on Slavery*, in which, after refuting the stale plea of *necessity*, so common in his day, as well as in our own, he declared, 'I strike at the root of this complicated villainy; I absolutely deny all slaveholding to be consistent with any degree of natural justice.' And again, after setting aside the plea of title to a human being, arising from war or contract, he repudiates that of birth also, by saying, 'Much less is it possible that any child of man should ever be born a slave. Liberty is the right of

every human creature as soon as he breathes the vital air, and no human law can deprive him of that right.' Now this language cannot be misunderstood. Here are none of those incomprehensible distinctions between slavery and slaveholding, between the system and its practice, or between slavery in the hands of a professor of religion, or that of an open sinner. The declaration of the founder of Methodism strikes at the root and sweeps away every plea arising from necessity or circumstances. Now who can believe that while John Wesley was thus denouncing slavery in England, that he was at the same time allowing and approving of it in America? To say one thing and practice another, was no part of his character. And, consequently, those avowed friends who assert that slavery was allowed by him in the American societies, expose him to the charge of the most consummate hypocrisy, and really throw greater obloquy upon his character than was ever done by his bitterest enemies."

" During the seven years' war, all amicable communication between this and the mother country had ceased. In 1778, all the English preachers had returned, except Mr. Asbury, and he, it is well known, was confined mostly to the small State of Delaware. By this circumstance the advice and control of the older preachers were almost entirely lost to the rising societies. And consequently the extension of the cause and the founding of societies were committed to young and inexperienced men, most of whom had been as yet taught the way of the Lord but very imperfectly ; and who had been themselves born and educated in slaveholding countries. For in this great revival of religion, some preachers, almost immediately on their conversion, were sent, not only to preach, but to found churches, receive members, and administer the entire discipline.

" Most of these young preachers had been also born and raised in the midst of slavery, and, with the Rev. Freeborn Garrettson, could say that they did not know it was wrong. ' Had never read a book on the subject, nor had been told so by any.' The forty-eight preachers who were received into the itinerancy during the war, belonged almost exclusively to this class. All the Conferences which were held from 1776 to 1787 were held in what is now denominated the slaveholding States. So entirely was early Methodism confined to this section of our country, that from 1777 to 1783 there was not one appointment of a preacher north of some parts of New Jersey ; and out of a membership of about 14,000, as reported at the Conference of the last year, only about 2000 resided in what is now called the free States. And further, very many of these preachers, thus imperfectly taught and always accustomed

to slavery, had not, for a considerable time, the advice or distant supervision of Mr. Asbury.

" For, in 1779, mainly on account of the ordinances, the more southern preachers, amounting to far more than one half of the entire body, seceded, holding a separate Conference in Fluvanna, Virginia : while Mr. Asbury held one consisting of only seventeen preachers, in Kent county, Delaware. Each Conference passed its own resolutions, stationed its preachers, and exercised discipline over their respective societies. This separation continued during the seventh and eighth Conferences, or part of the years 1779-80. And, although in May of the latter year, a reconciliation took place, so far as to suspend the ordinances and admit Mr. Asbury into the seceding Conference, yet the two bodies never met at the same time and place till the year 1784. And even during this interval, after the reconciliation, there is sufficient evidence that the administration of the General Assistant was received with considerable caution. Now, in view of these transactions, there are very few historical facts so well attested as this : *That slavery found its way into the American societies, during the confusion of the Revolution, when Mr. Wesley had no communication with this country, when Mr. Asbury was confined to the State of Delaware, when the reception of members and the government of the church were in the hands of the young and inexperienced, and when more than one half of the Church was entirely under the control of those who had been born and raised in the midst of slavery, the sin of which they had never yet been taught.*

" And it must be remembered, that, at this time, there was no written rule on slavery. The article in our present Discipline on this subject, was never in Mr. Wesley's General Rules, for he had no need of such a rule to keep slavery out of his societies in England. Hence we can account for the resolution found in the minutes of 1780, requiring those preachers who held slaves ' to give promises to set them free.' For upon examination, some of these preachers, so recently converted and almost immediately sent out to preach, were found to be possessed of slaves. That was comparatively a dark day, the sin of slavery had never been discussed. Many were sinning ignorantly in unbelief.

" At the Conference of 1780, some of those preachers, so recently converted and sent forth to preach, were, upon examination, found to be possessed of slaves. Of this fact the Elder who had licensed them might have been ignorant ; or, more probably, like the preachers themselves, might not have been apprised of its evil nature. But little had been said in America on the sin of slavery, before the arrival of the preachers sent out by John Wesley.

Whether these belonged exclusively to the more southern Conference which met in Virginia, or were common to both, we cannot at this time determine. The Conference in Baltimore, however, made the following requisition :

“ ‘ This Conference requires those travelling preachers who hold slaves, to give promise to set them free.’ ”

“ We cannot tell whether slavery had been discovered in any other department of the Church ; but in the case of travelling preachers, a solemn promise was required that they should immediately and unconditionally set their slaves free. This was the impulsive action of holy men, uninfluenced by the consideration of the advantages or disadvantages with which this subject was afterwards entangled. The number, however, of those who held slaves must have been very small, as there appears to have been no opposition to the passage of the above rule, nor any difficulty in its execution. It seems to have removed the evil at once, for, from this year, we only hear of its existence among the laity and local preachers ; but we have not the slightest evidence that any travelling minister was connected with slavery, for a long time after this period.

“ This Conference, not satisfied with removing it in detail, struck a blow against the entire system, with all its bearings and relations, in the following declaration of sentiment.

“ ‘ This Conference acknowledges that slavery is contrary to the laws of God, man, and nature, and hurtful to society, contrary to the dictates of conscience and pure religion, and the doing that which we would not others should do to us and ours.’ ”

“ This was a noble testimony, worthy the men who made it, the gospel which they preached, and the churches which they were planting. It was put forth in the very seat of slavery, at the zenith of the slave trade, in the midst of a revolution, when a timid or worldly policy would have suggested silence, and at a time in which almost every man’s hand was raised against them. There was a moral sublimity in their attitude. As ambassadors from God, they fearlessly published abroad the doctrines of their commission. They did not wait until public opinion was ready to receive their principles. They were in advance of public opinion more than half a century. Circumstances were not to mould them ; but, on the contrary, they set themselves about moulding the world and its institutions to the doctrines of Christ. None were more willing to yield obedience to Cæsar in that which was his ; but then Cæsar must not invade the Temple of God, nor trammel them in the carrying out of their high commission. This moral monument, erected sixty years ago, in what has been called

the Monumental City, still towers splendidly amidst the desolations which surround it, throwing a halo of glory around the men who raised it, and reflecting a withering rebuke to those ministers in our church who have since plead for slavery or apologized for it.

"Believing, then, that slavery was sinful, they bore their testimony against it, and advised its immediate abandonment. They saw, at this time, in our history, no reason why the sin of slavery should be treated differently from other sins.

"It must be, however, remembered, that this noble testimony was put forth, at first, by only a part of the church—the Conference of 17 members which met in Baltimore with Bishop Asbury at its head. Whether the Conference in Virginia, of this year, would have gone so far, or would have suffered the one in Baltimore to put forth this declaration, had they been joined with them, are questions which, at this period, can never be answered. But it is a historical fact, that, on the union of the two Conferences, they acquiesced in this declaration, incorporated it in their Minutes, and made its sentiment the opinion of the entire Church of that day in reference to slavery.

"The publication of this, accompanied with their solemn advice that all the enslaved should be set at liberty, was deemed by Mr. Lee, the southern historian of Methodism, 'Going too far, and calculated to irritate the minds of our people, and not to convince them of their errors.' And this opinion appears to have been endorsed by Dr. Bings in *his reputed* history of our Church. Now, we do not see how they could have done anything, and have done less than this. Had they done less, they would have tacitly consented to slavery. Their position, and that of every gospel minister in this country, on this question, was one which admitted of no neutrality. At this early day, sixty-two years ago, slavery began to distract the councils, and disturb the spirit of our Church.

* * * * *

"Our northern apologists and historians have mistaken the knowledge of this period of our history. How often have I heard aged members of our Church at the South, lament the awful *dereliction* of principle in this case, since the time of their first union with the Church. To use their own language, they had made themselves poor by the unconditional emancipation of their slaves, to obtain a standing in the Methodist Episcopal Church, but that they had lived to see that very Church vitiated and overrun with slavery and oppression of their brethren.

"A pamphlet, attributed by Mr. Flournoy, of Georgia, to the Rev. Gabriel Capers, brother of Dr. W. Capers, gives by far a better draught of the times of which we write.

"Many years ago,' says Mr. C., 'the venerable Bishops Coke and Asbury published a pamphlet on slavery, which compelled the enlightened and benevolent (!) Legislature of South Carolina to pass an act authorizing any person to repair to Methodist meetings and disperse the negroes, whether assembled with or without permission from their owners. The act was justified by the first law of nature, self-defence, and based upon the fact that Methodism at that period, whether at the North or South, was identified with the most DEADLY OPPOSITION TO SLAVERY. It continued in force, and with the utmost propriety, too, until the ministers of that denomination CEASED to assail the institution of bondage, and to expel the members of their societies for buying and selling a slave under any circumstances.'

"Here is no modifying or mitigating, but the most deadly opposition, confronting the monster in mortal conflict. The history of these times abounds with similar testimonies. In the adoption of the Federal Constitution, Mr. Marshall, afterwards Chief Justice, avowed in the Convention, that if the government countenanced slavery, it 'would lose the support of the Methodists and Quakers.'

"Thus, our fathers labored to '*extirpate*' this evil, and no doubt believed with Jefferson, Wythe, and other statesmen of the South, that they had given it its death wound, and that it was even then waning to its final extinction."

CHAPTER II.

THE SUBSEQUENT ACTION OF THE CHURCH ON SLAVERY, AS EXHIBITED BY THE DISCIPLINE, THE DOCTORS AND BISHOPS OF THE M. E. CHURCH.

THE decided opposition to slavery that was developed in the first chapter, was doubtless gratifying to the friends of truth and liberty. But that pleasure must be short lived. Subsequent action followed rapidly, of a less decided character, from time to time; until it degenerated sadly, and became in fact and in form, a justification and defence of slavery, in the Methodist E. Church! It is readily acknowledged here, that this has been denied by those in authority. The historian of the Methodist Episcopal Church, N. Bangs, D. D.,

insisted strenuously during the controversy on abolitionism, in opposition to the declarations of abolitionists, that "The Methodist Episcopal Church has held one undeviating language in opposition to slavery." And in the first volume of his History of the Church, on page 218, speaking of the general rule on slavery as it was published in 1789, he says: "The item in the General Rules, on slavery, has remained unaltered to the present time, and is therefore expressive of the sense of the Methodist Episcopal Church upon this subject, without variation."

Whatever may be the grounds on which the above assertions, respecting the undeviating opposition of the Church, can be made to appear even plausible, it is impossible to demonstrate their truth. An appeal to the authentic records of the Church will disprove these declarations.

Two particulars claim attention,—the opinions and advice given by the authorities of the Church; and the laws adopted for the regulation of slavery. Have the opinions and advice been undeviating? Have the laws remained unchanged? Let the following narrative answer.

In 1784, slaveholding was declared to be contrary to the Golden Rule; and, universal emancipation was required of all the members. The traffic was forbidden, and none were to be admitted into the Church, until they executed and recorded, legally, instruments securing emancipation to their slaves. Had there been no deviation from the course here marked out, glorious results to religion and liberty would have been realized. But what was the fact? We learn from Mr. Lee's History of Methodism, that in about six months after their passage, at the Conference for 1785, the following action was had:

"It is recommended to all our brethren to suspend the execution of the minute on slavery, till the deliberations of a future Conference." And this closed their history forever. From this period, no mention is made of the subject of slavery in the records of the Conferences, for eleven years! At the Conference held in Baltimore, October 20, 1796, a section was introduced in answer to this question, "*What regulations shall be made for the extirpation*

of the crying evil of African slavery?" By referring to it, as quoted in the previous chapter, it will be discovered that the following are its provisions. To sell a slave is forbidden. The purchase of slaves is allowed, on condition of future emancipation, to be determined by the quarterly meeting conference. Slaveholders were allowed to be admitted into the church, provided the preacher spoke to them "freely and faithfully on the subject of slavery." And slaveholders were allowed to hold official stations in the church, provided the laws of the State, or the circumstances of their case (!) would not admit of emancipation. Eight years after this, the selling of slaves was allowed, if the circumstances of the case were in the judgment of a committee justifiable! and full license was granted to all the members of the Church within the limits of five States of the Union, to buy and sell slaves without let or hindrance, in these words : "The members of our societies in the States of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Tennessee shall be exempted from the operation of the above notes." And in 1808, all that related to slaveholding among private members was stricken out of the Discipline !

Says Rev. E. Smith, on this subject :—" But the reader will not be able to understand the general rule as now found in the Discipline, unless he clearly distinguish between the powers and acts of the primary General Conferences, which met before 1808, and the one that met at that time, and the delegated ones which met after that period. The primary General Conferences had full power to change any part of the Discipline. All parts were placed on the same basis ; and the last act modified or superseded all previous ones ; hence the general rule which forbade the buying or selling of men, women or children, was so far superseded by the rule of 1798 as to admit of buying to continue in slavery for a limited time ; and by that of 1804, so as to sell into perpetual slavery in certain cases, in any of the slave States ; and both to buy and sell with impunity, in the States of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Tennessee. So that there was no rule in the Discipline, at the meeting of the conference of 1808, which prohibited the buying or selling slaves, in four northern States, in any sense,

or to any extent, or wholly forbade it in any of the States. In the other slave States, the rule allowed members to buy slaves to free them, when the purchased slaves had served the time fixed by the quarterly meeting conference to remunerate their purchasers for the price of their purchase, which would, in many cases, be longer than the slaves' lives ; and to sell, when in the judgment of a committee it was an act of "mercy and humanity," and the slave desired to be sold. This was the rule of the Church at that time—the Discipline of that period. All these provisions were adopted after the change in the rule in 1792 ; and as they were passed by primary General Conferences, they set aside to all intents and purposes the general rule, so far as they conflicted with it. This important point, which is essential to a clear and full understanding of the Church's position, at this time, has been overlooked by every writer I have seen ; in consequence of which, all have failed to see the true, the exact position of the Church. The general rule did not prohibit at all the buying or selling of slaves in four of the slave States, and permitted it to some extent in all the others. This is the true state of the case."

The above is a brief history of her deviations respecting slavery in her membership. Nor has her testimony against the system of slavery been less equivocal and changing. That testimony, in part, consists in measures for the agitation of slavery with a view to its overthrow. Thus, in 1780, it was declared contrary to all law, human and divine ; and in 1784, the Church thought it her "bounden duty to take immediately some effectual method to extirpate this abomination." This sentiment against slavery was reaffirmed in 1785, in the following words :—"We do hold in the deepest abhorrence the practice of slavery ; and shall not cease to seek its destruction, by all wise and prudent means." Consistently with this declaration, in 1796, the General Conference requested the preachers and members to "consider the subject, and impart to the next session of that body any important thoughts upon the subject, that the Conference may have full light, in order to take further steps towards the eradicating this enormous evil from that part of the church of God to which we are connected "

" And the Annual Conferences are directed to draw up addresses for the gradual emancipation of the slaves, to the legislatures of those States in which no general laws have been passed for that purpose. These addresses shall urge in the most respectful, but pointed manner, the necessity of a law for the gradual emancipation of the slaves ; proper committees shall be appointed by the Annual Conferences, out of the most respectable of our friends, for the conducting of the business ; and the Presiding Elders, Elders, Deacons and Travelling Preachers, shall procure as many signatures as possible to the addresses ; and give all the assistance in their power, in every respect, to aid the committees, and to further this blessed undertaking. LET THIS BE CONTINUED FROM YEAR TO YEAR, TILL THE DESIRED END BE ACCOMPLISHED."

Who would believe that these "wise and prudent means" would ever be abandoned, or before "the desired end" was accomplished ? Yet such was their fate. At the very next session after the one for which they desired "full light," all that relates to action against slavery, by petition and otherwise, was struck out ! and in the place thereof, the following was substituted, as the 5th answer to the question, "What shall be done for the extirpation of the evil of slavery?" And what was proposed? Read the following :—"5. Let our teachers, from time to time, as occasion serves, admonish and exhort all slaves to render due respect and obedience to the commands and interests of their respective masters"!! Strange that the very walls did not cry out, "SHAME," at the Methodist General Conference that could leave so noble a position in defence of truth and liberty, for so low a place in subserviency to slavery's power ! .

In 1808, the General Conference provided that the Annual Conferences should "form their own regulations relative to buying and selling slaves." This placed it in the power of the body of the preachers to act efficiently in one direction against slavery, even should the General Conference choose wholly to refrain. But in 1820, this was withheld. The only changes made in the Discipline since, were the addition, in 1824, of the following paragraphs to the section on slavery. If the reader can discover any connection between the extirpation of the evil of slavery, and these provisions, he is possessed of remarkable keenness of perception.

"3. All our preachers shall prudently enforce upon our members the necessity of teaching their slaves to read the word of God ; and to allow them time to attend upon the public worship of God on our regular days of divine service.

"4. Our colored preachers and official members shall have all the privileges which are usual to others in the district and quarterly conferences, where the usages of the country do not forbid it. And the presiding elder may hold for them a separate district conference, where the number of colored local preachers will justify it.

"5. The Annual Conferences may employ colored preachers to travel and preach, where their services are judged necessary ; provided that no one shall be so employed without having been recommended according to the form of Discipline."

And here closes the history of her opposition to slavery as a system. These provisions yet [July, 1848,] remain, as the whole action of the Methodist Episcopal Discipline against slavery.

Thus far, no allusion has been made to the general rule on slavery. That now claims attention. All will have discovered, in the oft changing course of the Church, a confirmation of the remark, that her action degenerated sadly, until it became in fact a justification and defence of slavery. And also it will be agreed, that nothing could be farther from the facts, than to say that "the Methodist E. Church has held one undeviating language in opposition to slavery." Nor will the evidence to be adduced, be less conclusive in showing that the item in the General Rules on slavery, has been materially altered since its adoption.

There is nothing on the subject of slavery in the General Rules as drawn up by Mr. Wesley. These Rules were adopted without alteration by the first Methodist societies. So says Mr. Lee, in his History of Methodism. Dr. Bangs publishes the General Rules as adopted in 1784, at the organization of the Church. These contain a rule on slavery. Mr. Robert Emory, in his History of the Discipline, remarks, that these Rules "do not seem to have been published in any edition of the Discipline, until 1789. It is in this Discipline that we find, for the first time, among the General Rules, one respecting slaves. It reads"—

"The buying or selling of the bodies and souls of men, women or children, with an intention to enslave them."

This language is remarkably emphatic. It is expressive of indignation, and conveys a severe rebuke of the act which it prohibits.

It declares that the slave trade is a traffic in souls. No one can read it, without associating in his mind the wickedness of mystic Babylon ; a distinguishing trait of whose degeneracy was, that she made merchandize of "slaves," or, as the margin reads, "bodies," "and souls of men." From the fact that this form of expression is used by Coke and Asbury in their notes on the Discipline, and from their well known detestation of the system, it is a reasonable conjecture, at least, that they formed this rule thus, and from special design. It remained thus, however, only three years. At the General Conference of 1792, it was made to read as follows :

"The buying or selling of men, women or children, with an intention to enslave them."

By this change the rule was made less emphatic. It does not convey that indignant rebuke against soul-trading, which gave to the original rule its emphasis. But it prohibits buying, and it prohibits selling, either a man, woman or child. A single act embraced in this clause rendered a person liable to expulsion.

Although shorn of its strength to a very great extent, it was not yet sufficiently enfeebled to accommodate the spirit of slavery, whose growing strength demanded the removal of all opposing influences, great or small. In accordance with the sentiment just now expressed, the General Rule was altered in 1808, to read thus :

"The buying and selling of men, women and children, with an intention to enslave them."

For this alteration no authority is given from the journal of the General Conference. But the influence by which it was brought about, may easily be determined by the fact, that it was at this Conference that all relating to slave-holding among private members, was struck out of the Discipline. The character of this final alteration will be perceived more readily by the following remarks. It is impossible to violate this law as it now reads, without committing six distinct crimes. The buying of men—the buying of women—the buying of children ; and the selling of men—the selling of women—the selling of children ! Five of these acts may be

performed, and the perpetrator be within the provisions of the law. He may buy men ; he may sell men ; he may buy women ; he may sell women ; he may buy or he may sell children ; but unless both acts last specified are done in addition to all before named, he may be a member of the Church, in good and regular standing !

The effect of this deterioration has been, virtually, to authorize the traffic in slaves. For although it is conceded, that in some instances, years ago, members were called to account for selling slaves, under this rule, yet it is also known, that these cases were few and far between ; and the traffic has long since, at the South, ceased to be regarded as an offence calling for church action. Besides, many were known to be openly engaged in this horrible traffic in the " bodies and souls of men," who were members, and even preachers in the M. E. Church. Add to this the fact, that southern ministers have openly, and without rebuke from the executive authority of the Church, declared in the General Conference, that this General Rule was, and must of necessity be, " a dead letter " in the South.

The General Rule as it now stands, has been the same for forty years past, being altered in 1808 ! And what follows ? The modifying conviction comes home to every mind, that the Church, from the year 1785 until 1808, has been engaged in modifying her regulations, and giving up her strong scriptural doctrines on slavery. So that for forty years past all her members have been permitted to purchase and hold slaves at their own option. Besides the declaration of Dr. Bangs respecting the General Rule, which these facts clearly disprove, it may not be amiss to observe, that the same declaration was made by the Bishops in their address to the General Conference of 1840. This address was in part read at the General Conference of 1844, by Bishop Soule, in his speech on Bishop Andrew's case. The extract read as above, contains this sentence :

" Our General Rule on slavery, which forms a part of the constitution of the Church, has stood from the beginning unchanged, as testamentary of our sentiments on the principle of slavery and the slave-trade." —It may be that these venerable men have over-

looked the facts adduced above, for no one will suppose them guilty of wilful misrepresentation. But the reader will have observed, that "the constitution of the Church" has been changed twice since "the beginning," in favor of slavery. And as these changes are "testamentary" of their "sentiments on the principle of slavery and the slave-trade," the conclusion is inevitable, that their sentiments on these subjects were more friendly than inimical thereto.

The opinion that the Methodist E. Church has modified her regulations against slavery, so as to make them more tolerant and friendly to the system, is not now confined to abolitionists, or those who may be deemed antagonist to her interests. The Address of the Bishops before mentioned, contains the following declarations :

"The experience of more than half a century, since the organization of our ecclesiastical body, will afford us many important lights and landmarks, pointing out what is the safest and most prudent policy to be pursued in our onward course, as regards African slavery in these States, and especially in our own religious community."

"In all the enactments of the Church relating to slavery, a due and respectful regard has been had to the laws of the States, never requiring emancipation in contravention of the civil authority, or where the laws of the States would not allow the liberated slave to enjoy his freedom. Rules have been made, from time to time, regulating the sale and purchase, and holding of slaves, with reference to the different laws of the States where slavery is tolerated; which, upon the experience of the great difficulties of administering them, and the unhappy consequences both to masters and servants, have been as often changed or repealed."

It is here expressly asserted, that "all the enactments of the Church relating to slavery" have been framed, changed and repealed, not by reference to the eternal principle of truth and right, but by the cruel laws of the varying slave code, and in obedience to the prejudices of slaveholders. The following, from Dr. Durbin's speech on Bishop Andrew's case, is to the same effect :

"We have had some strange statements here in regard to the legislation of the Church on the subject of slavery. Brethren have tried to make the impression, to use one of their own figures, that the North has been putting the screws on the South, and continu-

ally pressing them harder, until at last the compression can be endured no longer. Sir, the facts in the case are just the reverse of all this. The history of the Church shows this point indisputably, that the highest ground that has ever been held upon the subject was taken at the very organization of the Church, and that concessions have been made by the Church continually, from that time to this, in view of the *necessities* of the South ; that while the anti-slavery principle has never been abandoned, our rules have been made less and less stringent, and our language less and less severe,—because experience has shown it to be *absolutely necessary* for the welfare of the Church in the South—and these concessions have been made, too, while the power of the Church has been continually passing from the slaveholding to the non-slaveholding States. I trust brethren will bear this in mind. Without laying stress upon Mr. Wesley's vehement denunciation of slavery, what was the declaration of the Church in 1780 ? ‘*We pass our disapprobation on all our friends who keep slaves, and advise their freedom.*’ The language of 1784, when the Church was organized, was equally bold. All *private members* were required to emancipate their slaves in those States where the laws allowed of manumission. The action taken was too strong, sir, and in six months it was suspended, in accordance with the genius of Methodism, which does not all the good she would, but all she can. The Church then made a concession to the South on the score of *necessity*. Even the language of the question on slavery was mitigated. In 1796 it was, ‘What regulations shall be made for the extirpation of the crying evil of African slavery ?’ In 1804 it was, ‘What shall be done for the extirpation of the evil of slavery ?’ In 1808 all that relates to slaveholding among private members was stricken out, and no rule on the subject has existed since ! I might advert to other points to show the truth of my position, that the Church has gradually made concessions to the necessities of the slaveholding States, until our brethren from the South say they stand firmly on the ground of Discipline. But I forbear : it will not be denied by any who are conversant with the history of the Church. Is it necessary to make still another concession, and allow slavery to connect itself with our Episcopacy ?”

This is taken from the debates as published in the Christian Advocate and Journal of June 12, 1844.

It can no longer be disguised, that the statements of modern abolitionists on this point were true. Necessity compels the acknowledgment from those in high places in the Church. The rea-

son is readily understood. When the abolitionists set about arousing the Church, they urged the duty of anti-slavery action. This was met by the declaration that the Church was, and always had been, opposed to slavery. They then insisted, that her action had become modified, and finally suspended. The plain denial of this charge has already been cited. It was declared to be a vile slander, an abolition falsehood, and believed so to be by many. But the continued agitation of the subject—the increase of light—and the professed anti-slavery character of the Church, gave greater plausibility to the demand for action, and a crisis arrived. The subject was taken up by the Bishops, in their quadrennial address for 1840, when it was made to appear by them, that “the rules made from time to time” “have been as often changed or repealed.” And they declare, that “the experience of more than half a century” has made known to them “the safest and most prudent policy to be pursued” on this subject. And what was that? Hear them:—

“The solemn conviction of our minds is, that no new ecclesiastical legislation on the subject of slavery, at this time,” is called for. This was repeated by the senior bishop in 1844. Thus the ever varying and diminished action of the Church was not only declared, but justified by the whole board of Bishops.

Thus far, the argument respecting the true character of the Church has been restricted to a view of her disciplinary or constitutional provisions. But that has not been the whole of her action, on behalf of slavery, and in opposition to the interests of the slave. It is only the limited index of an extensive volume of startling incidents. It yet remains to present an array of efforts, put forth by men high in authority—constitutional bodies—and the General Conference itself, which will appear as directly opposed to the conduct set forth in the first chapter, as light is to darkness. These will not be any proof as to the nature of the constitution, but will show how it was understood by those who are best able to judge of its intent and design; and, perhaps, furnish a mortifying comment upon the remark of John Wesley, that the work of Methodism was, to “spread scriptural holiness over these lands.”

CHAPTER III.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE CHURCH — ACTION ON SLAVERY AND
ABOLITIONISM BY THE EXECUTIVE AUTHORITIES.

IT is a well known sentiment of distinguished writers on jurisprudence, that no people are better than their laws. This has been illustrated a thousand times, in the history of civil and ecclesiastical bodies. Whatever plausibility may be attached to arguments in favor of voluntary action, unconstrained by law, the world's history demonstrates, that the human mind, in the most cultivated state of society, recognizes the obligations of duty, only so far as they are made binding by the authority of known law, either human or divine ; and every act, that is not prohibited by law, all are disposed to recognize as consistent with existing law. An important illustration of these remarks is furnished by the history of the Methodist E. Church on the subject of slavery. The laws of that church on slavery have all passed in review before us. What has been the administration under them ? In order to appreciate properly the facts now to be arrayed in answer to this inquiry, it will be necessary to recapitulate, in brief, the previous action of the Church. The contrast will be important, in fixing the mind distinctly upon that which develops the principle above named.

The Church had prohibited slave-holding and slave-trading, by special statute. It had condemned the system of slavery, in the most expressive language, and by a frequent repetition of indignant rebuke. It had counselled the agitation and discussion of the subject, throughout the entire Connection — pledging to seek the destruction of slavery, and to continue the work “ from year to year, till the desired end be accomplished.” How that pledge has been adhered to, will now be made to appear. A methodical arrangement of facts is desirable ; but the action of individual dignitaries and associate bodies, as well as the sentiments and practice of individual ministers and conferences, on the question of slavery, are so

intimately associated, that it will be difficult to treat them separately. An arrangement, however, will be attempted, presenting in separate chapters, in the order named, the actions and opinions of the Bishops—the enactments of the Annual Conferences—the declared opinions and advice of the General Conference—and finally, the opinions of a few distinguished men in all parts of the Connection. A connected history of the anti-slavery efforts put forth by various members and ministers in the Church, will be reserved for a distinct portion of this work. Allusions to these efforts will be made only so far as may be necessary, in stating distinctly the facts coming under the above arrangement.

The action of the Bishops comes first in order. It is not here referred to merely as indicative of individual sentiments, but to show the official position they occupy on the subject of slavery. And this will prove the assertion that the Church has changed her ground; for if it had not, they would not act so directly in opposition to the conduct of Bishops Coke and Asbury.

THE OPINIONS AND ACTION OF THE BISHOPS.

Soon after the question of slavery and abolitionism began to be agitated in the New England States, two of the Bishops addressed a "Pastoral Letter" to the ministers and preachers of that part of the work. It was designed to discountenance the anti-slavery agitation. Of its character the reader can judge by the following extracts:—

" TO THE MINISTERS AND PREACHERS

Of the Methodist Episcopal Church within the New England and New Hampshire Annual Conferences.

" DEAR BRETHREN—Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

" We have marked, with deep solicitude, the painful excitement which, in some parts of your section of our charge, has been producing disturbance on the subject of the immediate abolition of slavery in the slaveholding States. We are happy, at the same time, to be able to say, that, having now, between us, attended all the Northern and Eastern Conferences, as far as Troy inclusive, we have found no such excitement, of any moment, within any of them, except yours: and, even within yours, we know that a large and highly respectable portion of yourselves, with, we incline to think,

a majority of our members and friends, greatly disapprove and deplore the existing agitations on this question. That a large majority of our preachers and people, within those of the non-slaveholding States generally, to which our recent visitations have extended, are decidedly opposed to the modern measures of immediate abolitionists, we are well assured: and believing, as we do, that these measures have already been productive of pernicious results, and tend to the production of others yet more disastrous, both in the church and the social and political relations of the country, we deem it our duty to address you a pastoral letter on the subject."

After this introductory, they proceed to argue the question, showing why the subject ought not to be agitated, and then after assuming that evil results will follow such discussion, the following recommendation is put forth respecting abolition preachers.

" And if any persist in so doing, whether from the pulpit or otherwise, we earnestly recommend to our members and friends everywhere, by all lawful and Christian means, to discountenance them in such a course. The presiding elders, especially, we earnestly exhort to discountenance such practices, both by their counsel and example. And if any, of whatever class, go beyond their own bounds, or leave their proper appointments, whether under the pretext of agencies or otherwise, to agitate other societies or communities on this subject, we advise the preachers, the trustees, and the official and other members to manifest their disapprobation, and to refuse the use of their pulpits and houses for such purposes."

This letter was signed by Elijah Hedding and J. Emory, Lansingburg, N. Y., Sept. 10, 1835. During the same year, Bishop Emory gave the first indication, that it was inconsistent with the character of the Methodist Church, to speak against slavery in the Annual Conferences. The facts are these:

At the New Hampshire Conference for 1835, there was presented by a committee a report against slavery. The incidents are thus related by one who was familiar with the facts. This statement has never been denied:

" When a resolution was introduced at the commencement of the New Hampshire Conference, to appoint a committee on slavery, Bishop Emory, who was in the chair, made no objection to the appointment of a committee on that subject; and he did not oppose

the reading of the report some two days before the Conference adjourned. But when a motion was made for its adoption, he did refuse to put it to the vote; yet when it was moved to go into a committee of the whole, he decided that the motion was in order—he put it, and called a brother to the chair. A motion was then made to adopt the report, and carried by a vote of about *seven-eighths* of the members of the Conference present and voting on the occasion. In this instance, the decisive voice of the Conference was heard in a committee of the whole, but not in a conference capacity, with the Bishop in the chair, as should have been the case. Here may be found, perhaps, the *first innovation upon Conference rights*. But this was a small innovation compared with those that have taken place since. In this instance, a committee was appointed without opposition, and without limitations or conditions—and without opposition the report was read, at a proper time; but when the question came up for its adoption, the Bishop refused to *act*, though he did not refuse to *let the Conference act*. This same good Bishop, who is probably now in heaven, did not refuse to *put* anti-abolition resolutions in the Maine Conference, a few days previous."

A copy of the Resolutions concluding the Report, is here inserted:

"Resolved 1. That the holding and treating the human species as property, is a sin against God, and a violation of the inalienable rights of humanity.

"Resolved 2. That ceasing to hold man as property, is the first and most effectual step which can be taken, by the enslaver, toward preparing the enslaved for the *proper use* of the rights and privileges of civil and religious society.

"Resolved 3. That as Christians, we are *morally* responsible for the existence and continuance of Slavery in these United States, and in the Christian church especially, and that we will use our Christian endeavors to bring it to a peaceful and speedy termination.

"Resolved 4. That as citizens of the United States we are responsible for the existence and continuance of Slavery in the District of Columbia, and in the Territories over which the Government of this nation has the control.

"Resolved 5. That a Committee of five persons be forthwith appointed, to draft and forward a memorial to our next General Conference, together with this report, and the foregoing resolutions, upon the subject of Slavery, praying that venerable body to give its testimony against this enormous evil, and to take such other measures as may be deemed proper, to free the Church and our common country from the dreadful calamities with which its continuance threatens the church and the nation.

I. F. ADAMS,
D. I. ROBINSON, }
J. PERKINS, } Committee."
S. NORRIS,

This opposition to anti-slavery principles was comparatively slight. But the Bishop threw all the weight of his official character against anti-slavery action. He compelled the Conference to forego its official character, and refused to act with them as an unauthorized body. This was followed by a more vigorous opposition to anti-slavery men and measures. At the General Conference for 1836, the whole board of Bishops united in their Pastoral Address to reprobate abolitionism. On this subject they hold the following language. The whole of it is quoted, because it is the first document touching the question from that source.

EXTRACT OF AN ADDRESS OF THE BISHOPS,

To the Members and Friends of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

" We now approach a subject of no little delicacy and difficulty, and which we cannot but think has contributed its full proportion to that religious declension over which we mourn. It is not unknown to you, dear brethren and friends, that, in common with other denominations in our land, as well as our citizens generally, we have been much agitated, in some portions of our work, with the very excitable subject of what is called abolitionism. This subject has been brought before us at the present session—fully, and we humbly trust, impartially discussed, and by almost a unanimous vote highly disapproved of ; and while we would tenderly sympathize with those of our brethren who have, as we believe, been led astray by this agitating topic, we feel it our imperative duty to express our decided disapprobation of the *measures* they have pursued to accomplish their object. It cannot be unknown to you, that the question of slavery in these United States, by the constitutional compact which binds us together as a nation, is left to be regulated by the several state legislatures themselves ; and thereby is put beyond the control of the general government, as well as that of all ecclesiastical bodies ; it being manifest that in the slaveholding States themselves, the entire responsibility of its existence or non-existence rests with those state legislatures. And such is the aspect of affairs in reference to this question, that whatever else might tend to meliorate the condition of the slave, it is evident to us, from what we have witnessed of abolition movements, that these are the least likely to do him good. On the contrary, we have it in the evidence before us, that their inflammatory speeches, and writings, and movements, have tended, in many instances, injuriously to affect his temporal and spiritual condition, by hedging

up the way of the missionary who is sent to preach to him Jesus and the resurrection, and by making a more rigid supervision necessary on the part of his overseer, thereby abridging his civil and religious privileges.

"These facts, which are only mentioned here as a reason for the friendly admonition which we wish to give you, constrain us, as your pastors, who are called to watch over your souls as they who must give an account, to exhort you to abstain from all abolition movements and associations, and to refrain from patronizing any of their publications; and especially from those of that inflammatory character which denounce in unmeasured terms those of their brethren who take the liberty to dissent from them. Those of you who may have honest scruples as to the lawfulness of slavery, considered as an abstract principle of moral right and wrong, if you must speak your sentiments, would do much better to express yourselves in those terms of respect and affection, which evince a sincere sympathy for those of your brethren who are necessarily, and, in some instances, reluctantly associated with slavery in the states where it exists, than to indulge in harsh censures and denunciations, and in those fruitless efforts, which, instead of lightening the burden of the slave, only tend to make his condition the more irksome and distressing.

"From every view of the subject which we have been able to take, and from the most calm and dispassionate survey of the whole ground, we have come to the solemn conviction that the only safe, scriptural, and prudent way for us, both as ministers and people, to take, is wholly to refrain from the agitating subject, which is now convulsing the country, and consequently the Church, from end to end, by calling forth inflammatory speeches, papers and pamphlets. While we cheerfully accord to such, all the sincerity they ask for their belief and incites, we cannot but disapprove of their measures, as alike destructive to the peace of the Church, and to the happiness of the slave himself.

"Signed by order and in behalf of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

ROBERT R. ROBERTS,
JOSHUA SOULE,
ELIJAH HEDDING,
JAMES O. ANDREW

THOMAS L. DOUGLASS, Sec'y.

Cincinnati, O., May 26, 1836."

Of this document it is only necessary now to remark, that its influence on the abolitionists was very soon apparent. The author-

ties of the Church construed the "admonition" "to abstain from all abolition movements and associations, and to refrain from patronizing any of their publications," as the LAW of the Church. And ministers were arraigned and suspended from their ministerial functions for not complying therewith.

The previous conduct of the Bishops being thus endorsed by the General Conference, and recommended to the Church for their imitation, the reader will not be surprised to find their subsequent action somewhat in advance of the incident first named, in opposition to anti-slavery efforts. Such was the fact. One of the earliest Conferences after the above address was issued, was that held in New England. An eye-witness, a member of the Conference, [Rev. O. Scott,] thus speaks of this session :

" At the New England Conference, in 1836, when a resolution was introduced to appoint a committee on slavery and abolition, Bishop Hedding stated, after it was read, that, had he known the character of the resolution, he should not have permitted it to be introduced *at that time*, as it would bring on debate, &c., thus clearly claiming the *right* to reject it, had he pleased to do so. The resolution, however, was adopted, and the committee was appointed without any conditions or restrictions. In adopting the resolution, the Conference *instructed* their committee to report at their earliest convenience. The committee were ready, and offered to make their report, two or three days before Conference adjourned, but our good Bishop refused to have it read—the ORDER of the Conference to the contrary notwithstanding. Several times after this, did the committee attempt to obey the Conference, by asking leave to present their report, but were refused by the president; and they were finally told, that the report must not be presented till every thing else was done !

" But this is not all. When at eleven o'clock, on the last evening of the Conference, the report was read, the president refused to put a motion for its adoption, unless it could be read over again, and considerable time taken up in discussing it, for there were some portions of it that he was not certain he could consistently put the question to adopt. This stand, of course, entirely defeated the measure, as it was then near 12 o'clock at night, and the Conference were determined to adjourn *sine die*, when they adjourned at all.

" Thus ended the attempt in the New England Conference, in 1836, to express a sentiment on the subject of slavery and aboli-

tion. And in consequence of this failure, the New Hampshire Conference, which sat immediately after, attempted nothing, but simply to pass a resolution approving the course of their delegates in the last General Conference. The president hesitated a little when the resolution was offered, inquiring whether it was designed to *approve the conduct of the two brethren who attended the anti-slavery meeting?*

The allusion in these few last words needs some explanation. At the General Conference of 1836, two brethren, delegates from the New Hampshire Conference, were censured for attending an anti-slavery meeting, by a formal vote. The Bishop was unwilling that the Conference should approve these brethren. The ensuing remarks, from a member of that Conference, will be of interest to the reader, and directly in point. Bro. Storrs, who is named, was one of the "two brethren." Speaking of the Conference, he says:

"One incident occurred which excited some surprise and pleasantry. When Bro. Storrs' case was under consideration, the Bishop labored long and hard to convince him and the Conference, that the General Conference did not censure him, or any other member, for lecturing on abolitionism, but it was *two brethren*, without naming any one. Afterward, when the resolution approving the conduct of our delegates was under consideration, he wished 'to know what was intended by the movers of it—whether they intended to approve of their conduct generally, or only in Conference—to *all*, or only a *part* of the delegates;' and then remarked, 'he supposed we did not mean to approve of the conduct of those *two brethren who were CENSURED by the General Conference.*'"

During the year ensuing, the preachers and members of the Church in New England especially, became more than ever interested in the subject of slavery. They were persuaded that the course of the presiding Bishop was in violation of the spirit and laws of Methodism. A deep abhorrence of slavery was becoming more general, and petitions were prepared and signed by thousands of the members, praying the Annual Conference to take some action on the subject. The time for the session arrived. The preachers came together determined to act; and the Bishop met them, fully decided that they should not act, unless as he thought expedient. The account which is now presented, was prepared by a member of the Conference who was present and took part therein. It gives a correspondence between the preachers and the Bishop on

the subject. He begins with answering the question—Why did they correspond with the Bishop? He says :

" We have been frequently asked, since Conference, why any previous correspondence was had with the Bishop upon this subject at all?—why we did not carry the matter into the Conference, and have it decided there at once?

" If our judgment may be depended on for an answer to this inquiry, we would say, there were a number of reasons for the course which was taken by the anti-slavery brethren. So far as they had been informed, there were good reasons for anticipating opposition from the president of the Conference, against *any* action of that body in its conference capacity, on the subject of slavery. This anticipation was well founded, as the sequel proved.

" Again, the brethren did not wish to embarrass Bishop Waugh. It was well known that this was the first time that he had ever presided at the New England Conference, and the fact that the duties of his station were not only arduous, but new to him, led many to suppose, that he would prefer to correspond with them, upon this subject, that he might have more time to deliberate on the best course for him to take in the discharge of what he might believe to be his duty. It also seemed desirable for him to know what the views of a majority of the Conference were, that he might make up his mind with a knowledge of all the circumstances of the case.

" Accordingly, at a meeting of the anti-slavery brethren, a committee was appointed to wait on the Bishop, and confer with him upon the subject. They did so, and at a subsequent meeting of the preachers, they reported, that they made the following statements to Bishop Waugh through their chairman.

" JUNE 6, 1837.

" ' BISHOP WAUGH :—These brethren and myself have been selected by the anti-slavery brethren, who are preachers, and most of them members of the New England Conference, to inform you that memorials and petitions have been forwarded from members of our Church, in different parts of the Conference, praying the Conference to take such action on the subject of slavery as is set forth in the petitions themselves. And the Conference, for their brethren and themselves, would request the privilege of introducing them, and having them referred to a select committee, immediately after the appointment of the regular committees to-morrow. They would simply add, that the time for the introduction and reference of these memorials or petitions will probably be very short, as the reading of one will be altogether sufficient, inasmuch as they will all be of a similar description '

" We presented this address to Bishop Waugh, and he stated to us that he wished some time to consult some brethren on the subject, and to consider. He stated that what course he should take if we insisted on immediate action, he could not say ; but he feared he should be obliged to act contrary to our wishes. We consented to wait for his answer until the next morning ; and the next morning made this statement to him :

" ' We think we have good reason to believe, that if the privilege of introducing these petitions and memorials of our people is denied, the Conference will refuse to act on any subject that shall be introduced.

J. A. MERRILL, for the Committee.'

" It was then voted, that a committee of five be appointed to fix on some proper plan of operations to be adopted by us in the Conference, in case the Bishop refuses to grant us our request.

" Brothers L. R. Sunderland, T. Merritt, S. W. Willson, R. Ransom and E. W. Stickney, were appointed on this committee.

" ' Voted, That we will unitedly sustain any measures the committee shall propose, and this body concur in.'

" The last vote was taken by rising, and all in the house, with one or two exceptions, rose in the affirmative—none in the negative.

MEMORIAL TO THE BISHOP.

" At another meeting in the afternoon of the same day, the following memorial was signed by nearly seventy members of the Conference. The next day the number was increased to about ninety.

" ' To Bishop Waugh.

" DEAR BROTHER :—The undersigned, members of the New England Annual Conference of the M. E. Church, now in session in this place, take this method to inform you, that they have in their possession a large number of memorials on the subject of slavery (similar to the one previously shown you by the Rev. J. A. Merrill) which they wish the privilege of presenting to the Conference to-morrow morning. We respectfully ask it as our right as a Conference, to appoint a committee to consider and report on the said memorials, as also the right to act, in a Conference capacity, on any report from such a committee.

" We ask of you the favor to inform us, whether we are to expect any opposition from yourself, as the president of the Conference, against any action of the Conference, in the premises above stated.

Nantucket, June 7, 1837.

PROPOSED MEASURES.

" The committee to fix on a plan of operations, then reported as follows :

" ' The committee to whom was referred the question as to the best measures for the Conference to take, in case the Bishop denies us the right of acting in a conference capacity on the memorials to be presented on the subject of slavery to-morrow morning—*Report*, That, in their opinion, the best measure in the case above supposed, will be to lay every other question upon the table, till this right is granted us ; as this question, under present circumstances, the committee believe to be paramount in its claims to any other which can at this time come before the Conference. And should this plan fail, we recommend that the Conference should adjourn to the commencement of another session, from time to time, till our rights are granted us ; and, that the intervals be spent in solemn prayer. And the committee would also recommend, that the accompanying memorial be circulated for signatures, and forthwith presented to the Bishop.

LA ROY SUNDERLAND, Chairman.

Nantucket, June 7, 1837.'

COMMITTEE FROM THE BISHOP

" A committee, consisting of brothers A. Kent, D. Kilburn, D. Fillmore, A. U. Swinerton, and H. H. White, announced themselves by their chairman, Bro. Kent, as a committee of a council called by the Bishop on the subject of the memorials, and stated that they came under the sanction of the Bishop, to see if some arrangement could not be made to avoid a collision between the anti-slavery brethren and the Bishop ; and they requested that a conference might be held with them, either by a committee or otherwise.

" Whereupon the following brethren were appointed a committee to confer with them, viz. :—Bros. T. Merritt, O. Scott, I. Bonney and L. R. Sunderland.

" The next meeting of the preachers was held June 8th, at which the brethren appointed to confer with the committee from the Bishop, reported in substance as follows :—

" That the objections of the Bishop and the minority against what was asked in the petition to the Bishop, were, that there was no need of conference action upon the subject of slavery, as our Church had always been an anti-slavery society,—that the General Conference had condemned the subject of abolition,—that any conference action would make the minority responsible for the views

set forth,—that it was not conference business,—that it would unchristianize the South,—that there was a real difference between abolition and anti-slavery,—that the bishops had consulted together and agreed to prevent, as far as possible, all *conference* action upon the subject,—that one bishop had, since the General Conference, refused to put a question upon the subject,—that the conference was not a legislative body, hence the memorials could not be received,—and finally, that we could do all we wished to do, just as well, in our individual capacity, &c.

"To these objections it was replied, that our Church was no more an anti-slavery society, than it had always been a temperance society; and if it were an anti-slavery society, there could be no objection against our speaking out as a conference on this subject,—that if the General Conference had condemned this subject, the minority of that conference were as unjustly involved and 'made responsible for the views of the majority,' as the minority would *now* be in this conference,—that it *was* conference business, if the conference choose to make it so, as much as the subject of temperance or education,—that our views on temperance unchristianized the South as really as our opinions on slavery; the South must take care of their own characters,—that the objections to conference action, upon this subject, were new and unheard of before, as the General Conference had acted on it, the Ohio, the New York, the Baltimore, Holston, and Maine Conferences had also acted upon it, and no objections were raised by the presiding Bishops,—that the memorials of our people did not ask any legislation on this subject, but they asked the Conference to express an opinion simply—and finally, that we could not act as an anti-slavery society, merely, on those memorials, because they were not addressed to us as a society, but to the Annual Conference as such, and that the objection to conference action formed the strongest reason why an opinion should be expressed by that body in its conference capacity.

"The committee from the Bishop wished he might be allowed till Friday morning for consultation and deliberation, when his decision, on the document presented to him, should be given. At six o'clock this evening the preachers met, and spent about two hours in solemn prayer.

THE BISHOP'S ANSWER.

"At half past four, Friday morning, June 9th, the preachers met to hear the decision of Bishop Waugh, which was presented in writing as follows:—

" NANTUCKET, JUNE 8, 1837.

To T. Merritt, I. Bonney, J. A. Merrill, and others:

" DEAR BRETHREN:—Last evening I received a communication signed by you, and upwards of sixty other members of the New England Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in which you inform me that you have in your possession a large number of memorials on the subject of slavery, (similar to the one shown me by the Rev. J. A. Merrill,) which you wish the privilege of presenting to the Conference. You also proceed to say, 'We respectfully ask it as our right as a Conference, to appoint a committee to consider and report on the said memorials, as also the right to act in a conference capacity on any report from such committee ;' and you close by asking me to inform you 'whether you are to expect any opposition from me as the president of the Conference, against any action of the Conference in the premises above stated.' In reply to your communication, I respectfully and affectionately say to you, that as far as may be consistent with my obligations to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, it will afford me pleasure to abstain from any course in which conflict or disagreement would be likely to arise on any subject which may come before the Conference. I cannot, however, admit the doctrine which you have set up in your communication, when you say that it is your *right* to appoint a committee to report on said memorial, and also to act on *any* report from such committee. I cannot admit this unqualified and unlimited doctrine of right, because I know of no instrument or organization, or established usage, which gives such a right to an annual conference. Annual conferences owe their existence to the General Conference, and cannot have organization, without the action of that body in fixing the boundaries thereof. The General Conference determines not only the location and bounds of an annual conference, but defines the business to which its action extends. It will not be pretended by any one, that an annual conference is a legislative body. Its functions are judicial and executive. Whence then the right claimed, to receive memorials on the subject of slavery, to refer them to a committee, and to act on any report which may be made by such committee? Has any conference, but the General Conference, jurisdiction over the subject of slavery? I believe not. It is, indeed, admitted, that those conferences within whose bounds slavery exists, can and ought to take such cognizance of the subject as they are empowered and directed to do, by the General Conference, and to perform executive acts in fulfilment of the regulations of the General Conference; but what executive act can be performed by an annual

conference on the subject of slavery, in whose bounds it has no existence? But the doctrine set up cannot be admitted, because of its destructive tendency. If an annual conference can extend its jurisdiction over questions other than those which are judicial and executive, then it may introduce and prosecute measures which may arraign, censure or condemn the very body which gives it existence. It may appoint a committee to investigate and report on any of our doctrines, either favorably or unfavorably. It may take under its revision the very Discipline itself, and by report sanction or condemn it. Such a doctrine is too absurd and subversive of order to be admitted. But even if it were true that the right existed, would there be *expediency* in its exercise on the subject of slavery and abolition, at the present time? Will you, brethren, hazard the unity of the Methodist Episcopal Church, destroy and break down her onward march, by agitating those fearfully exciting topics, and that, too, in opposition to the solemn decision and deliberate conclusion of the General Conference? I cannot think that many of you can see your way clear to go so far. Are you willing to contribute to the destruction of our beautiful and excellent form of civil and political government, after it has cost the labor, treasure and blood of our fathers to establish it?—and who, themselves, agreed to place it by compromise on that very base which is now sought to be overthrown? Can you indulge in the zeal which hurries you on to the injury (if not the extermination) of the very race whose enslaved condition has so powerfully excited your sympathies? I beg you, dear brethren, to pause and consider before you proceed. I am not the apologist of slavery. I have long since settled my opinions and habits against it. I would that it were obliterated from the earth; but in view of the terrible consequences which are likely to follow the agitation of those exciting topics at the present, I cannot consent to be participant in any sense or degree, in those measures which are advocated by modern abolitionists. I am, nevertheless, earnestly desirous to avoid any collision with so large and respectable a portion of the New England Conference as have signed the communication named in this reply. For all of you, brethren, I cherish the most kind and affectionate regard. Some of you are my intimate friends, in whose society I have spent many pleasant moments. You must know, that I can have no motives of a personal or selfish nature in the course which I pursue on this unhappy subject. I have deliberated and prayed—I have counselled and advised; and have tremblingly, yet firmly, arrived at the following conclusions, and I now offer you the alternative. Before, however, I proceed to state them, I beg you to understand the ground on which the first propo-

sition is predicated. It is offered as a conciliatory measure, and is distinctly declared to be without intention or design to have it understood that the New England Conference, as such, is committed by this peace offering, to the cause of modern abolition. First, I will not oppose the reading of the memorials alluded to, in the Conference, nor will I object to putting the question to a motion to refer them to a committee to consider and report thereon; provided you will agree to two things, which are so reasonable in themselves, that I flatter myself they will readily meet your concurrence. These are, First, that in your report you will confine your action on the question of *slavery*, to a respectful petition or memorial to the General Conference of 1840; and Second, that you will agree not to publish your report to either the civil or religious community, so as to increase or keep up an excitement on the subject.

But if you like not this course, nor agree to it, then I must say, that on a motion to refer the memorial to a committee, I shall deem it my duty, for reasons which I will assign at the time, to refuse to put the motion to the vote, and time and eternity must disclose the true doctrine of responsibility for the consequences resulting.

"Affectionately yours, B. WAUGH."

"After the above letter was read, it was voted that it be referred to the following brethren as a committeee for further conference with the Bishop:—T. Merritt, O. Scott, J. Horton, La Roy Sunderland and James Porter.

SECOND LETTER TO BISHOP WAUGH.

"On Saturday morning, June 10th, Bro. O. Scott, for the committee of farther conference with the Bishop, reported a letter which had been communicated by the committee to the Bishop, and also his reply to the same; and also that they had had a conversation with Bishop Waugh, in which he stated, (in reply to a suggestion that his proposals made in his first letter were liable to different constructions,) that he did intend—1st, That the contemplated report should be simply and only a memorial to the General Conference; and—2d, That it should not be published at all in any way.

" " NANTUCKET, JUNE 9, 1837.

To Bishop Waugh:

"DEAR BROTHER:—The undersigned have been appointed a committee, by the brethren whose names were signed to the document presented you on the 7th inst., to confer with you in relation to your reply. Under the apprehension that you have misapprehended

our wishes, as also the views of the memorialists to whom we have before referred, we beg leave to state—

“ ‘ 1. That the memorials which we wish to present to the Conference do not ask for any legislative, judicial or executive action of our Conference. They simply ask that body to ‘ bear its solemn testimony against the great sin of slavery, and also to memorialize the General Conference on the subject.’ ”

“ ‘ 2. The members of the Conference who have addressed you upon this subject, do not claim any right of legislative, judicial or executive action. We wish simply to know, whether you will oppose, as president of the Conference, any proposed action of the Conference, by which it may express and publish an opinion on the evils of slavery, and the best means for hastening its peaceful termination. The right which we claim to express and publish an opinion upon this subject, we conceive to be the same as has already been exercised by the Ohio, Holston, Baltimore, New York and Maine Conferences, as well as the General Conference; and as the proposals in your communication of yesterday are, as we think, liable to different constructions, we respectfully request that you will give us in writing, as soon as may be, an answer to the following question :

“ ‘ Will you, as president of the New England Conference, oppose any proposed action of that body by which it may express and publish an opinion on the subject of slavery ? ”

“ ‘ With due respect and sincere affection,

T. MERRITT, O. SCOTT, J. HORTON, LA ROY SUNDERLAND, JAMES PORTER,	Committee.
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ANSWER TO THE ABOVE.

“ ‘ NANTUCKET, JUNE 9, 1837.

To the Rev. T. Merritt, O. Scott, La Roy Sunderland, Jotham Horton, and James Porter :

“ DEAR BRETHREN,—I have this day received your communication of this morning, informing me that you have been appointed a committee, by the brethren whose names were signed to a document presented to me on the 7th inst., to confer with me in relation to my reply, and saying that you were under the apprehension that I have ‘ misapprehended your wishes, as also the views of the memorialists to whom you have before referred,’ and requesting me to give an answer ‘ in writing as soon as may be.’ You also state

that the proposals in my communication of yesterday are, as you think, ‘ liable to different interpretations.’ To which, I respectfully and affectionately respond, that I regret that my reply should be either ambiguous or equivocal. I designed to speak a plain language, and if I have failed to express myself intelligibly some apology may be found for me in the circumstances in which I have been placed, in our intercourse on the subject in controversy between us. I however must do you the justice to say, that your communication of the 7th inst., to which my reply was made, is neither obscure nor equivocal. It will always speak for itself; and while words represent ideas, or convey sentiments, you will be understood to assert your ‘ right as a conference to appoint a committee to consider and report on said memorials, as also the right to act in a conference capacity on any report from such committee.’ My reply was designed to show, that for certain reasons which were given, I could not, as the president of an annual conference, admit such a doctrine of unlimited right in an annual conference; and that I could not become a participant in any such claim by allowing the action of the Conference on memorials which relate to slavery, and which also involve the doctrine of modern abolitionism. I regret that my offer of a conciliatory measure did not meet with favor in your eyes, and in view of its rejection, I have only to repeat, that I shall, as president of the New England Conference, decline to put to vote any question of reference on memorials which seek to keep up an excitement, and produce agitation on topics which the wisdom and authority of the General Conference have sought to quiet and put to rest.

“ Affectionately yours,

B. WAUGH.”

“ On reading the above letter, after considerable conversation upon the subject, it was resolved to present the memorials to the Conference, and in case the president should refuse to put a motion to refer them to a committee, that a motion should be made to adjourn the Conference, under the direction of a committee which had been appointed for this purpose.

THE ISSUE.

“ The memorials, as we have before informed our readers, were not presented till Wednesday morning, June 14th. When they had all been presented, a motion was made to refer them to a select committee to consider and report thereon. The president *refused to put this motion, and declared that there could be no appeal to the Conference from his decision in the case.* He also afterwards *declined giving any opinion as to whether those memorials*

had been received and were in the possession of the Conference or not, and further *refused to put a motion for the expression of an opinion by the Conference* on this question, and decided in this case, also, *that no appeal could be had to the Conference from his decision* on the subject."

A solemn protest against these Episcopal assumptions was signed by fifty-eight members of the Conference, and is in possession of the author. The whole of the preceding account may not be directly to the point under more immediate consideration, which is, the acts of the Bishops; but it is all so intimately connected, that the sense would be violated by separation.

At the New Hampshire Conference the same ground was taken. It may be proper to give a full statement of the proceedings at this Conference also. A friend who was present says:—

"The New Hampshire Conference met on Wednesday, July 5th, at 9, A. M. After reading, singing and prayer, the president opened with a short address, in which he traced the history of the M. E. Church in the United States, *apparently* to show that the annual conferences receive all their power from the General Conference; and as the General Conference has not *authorized* them to act, *except* on certain specified matters, the president is under no obligation to put any motion on *other* matters, and if they do any thing else, it is by mere courtesy; and that they had better do *necessary* and *important* business first;—do their *duty*, and then, if they had time, and were disposed to do any thing more, they might do it.

"The anti-slavery brethren had a meeting on Tuesday evening, and concluded to ask a committee on slavery.

"Accordingly, on Wednesday morning, a motion was made for a committee. The Bishop then addressed the Conference in opposition to the abolitionists, for perhaps an hour and a half, assigning his reasons for taking the stand he did, and argued that the Bible did justify *slavery* under some circumstances. He declined putting the vote for raising such a committee that day, but agreed to give them an answer the next morning whether he would consent to the appointment of it or not.

"Thursday morning, the Bishop presented the following string of conditions upon which he would consent to have the committee appointed.

"The president of the Conference agrees to put to vote the

motion to appoint a committee on slavery, on the following conditions—that is to say—

“ ‘ 1. The report of said committee shall not be read or adopted at any time when the president, through ill health or fatigue, is under the necessity of being out of the Conference.

“ ‘ 2. The Conference shall not act on the report of said committee till that part of the Conference business is finished which is necessary to prepare for fixing the appointments of the preachers.

“ ‘ 3. If, in the judgment of the president, the report of the said committee shall contain any article contrary to the Discipline of our Church, or contrary to the advice of the General Conference, as expressed in the Pastoral Address of that body, bearing date May 26, 1836, it is understood and admitted, that he, the said president, is under no obligation to put to vote any motion to adopt said report.

“ ‘ 4. If any preacher shall publish, or cause to be published, the report of said committee, or any part of it, or any statement respecting it, he shall be understood to be under obligation of honor to publish these conditions also.

“ ‘ 5. If the Conference shall adopt the motion to appoint the committee, that act shall be understood as an agreement to these conditions.

“ ‘ 6. If such committee shall be appointed, these conditions shall be spread on the journals.

July 6, 1847.

ELIJAH HEDDING.

“ The Conference refused to accept of the ‘conditions’ of the Bishop, but he was not willing to put a motion for this refusal, unless his ‘conditions’ were entered upon the conference journal!

“ Near the close, brother Jared Perkins arose, and having obtained liberty to offer a resolution, submitted the following :

“ ‘ Whereas the Baltimore Annual Conference, at its last session, did say, *That in all cases of administration under the General Rule in reference to buying and selling men, women and children, &c., it be and hereby is recommended to all committees, as the sense and opinion of this Conference, that the said rule be taken, construed and understood so as not to make the GUILT or INNOCENCE of the accused to depend upon the SIMPLE FACT of PURCHASE or SALE of such slave or slaves, but upon the attendant circumstances of cruelty, injustice or inhumanity, on the one hand, or those of kind purposes or good intentions on the other, under which the transactions shall have been perpetrated, and the charge be brought for immorality, and the circumstances be adduced as specifications under that charge,—*

" And whereas it is believed that the above sense and opinion of the Baltimore Conference is not that generally received by the Methodist E. Church, in reference to the General Rule :

" Therefore, *Resolved*, by the members of the New Hampshire Conference assembled, that we highly disapprove of the above sentiment as expressed by the Baltimore Annual Conference."

" Bishop Hedding refused to put the motion for the adoption of this resolution, and offered as his reason, that it would bring the two conferences into collision with each other, and that he could not consent to do an act calculated to produce that effect."

It is not necessary to cite any further evidence in proof of the opposition of the Bishops to the discussion of this subject. Their administration was the same, until finally they induced the Conferences to adopt such forms of expression as were not offensive to them. Then they permitted action !

The subject, however, will not be fully treated of, unless there be some mention made of a remarkable document from the pen of Bishop Hedding. It is usually designated "The Golden Rule Argument." To prevent any suspicion of unfairness, and furnish an interesting item in the anti-slavery history, all that part of the document relating to the rightfulness of slaveholding under peculiar circumstances, is here given.

EXTRACTS FROM BISHOP HEDDING'S ADDRESS.

" But it will be asked, What right has any member of our Church to own a slave ? Before I answer this question, I will just say, and I wish what I now say to be distinctly remembered. I am ready to disapprove the *slave trade*, the *system of slavery*, including all the unjust and cruel rights which any laws are supposed to give, and all the injustice and cruelties inflicted on slaves, as decidedly as Mr. Wesley did.

" But all these points are aside of the main question. The main question is, What right have any of our members to hold slaves ? Or, What right has the Church to allow them to hold slaves ? Lest I be misunderstood, before I proceed I beg you to observe, that owning or holding a slave, does not include exercising all the rights which the laws are supposed to give the master over the servant, but only such as are necessary for the good of the servant and the safety of the master, all the circumstances being taken into the account. Now let us answer the question. The right to hold a slave is founded on this rule, 'Therefore, all things

whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them ; for this is the law and the prophets.'—*Matt. vii. 12.* All acts in relation to slaves, as well as to every other subject, which cannot be performed in obedience to this rule, are to be condemned, and ought not to be tolerated in the Church. If no case can be found where a man can own a slave, and in that act obey this rule, then there is no case in which slave-owning can be justified. But if one case can be found where a man may hold a slave, and by the civil law own him, and in that act obey this rule, then there may be ten such cases, or ten thousand. And that there are many such cases among our brethren in the Southern States, I firmly believe. If I did not believe this, I could not do the duties the Church requires me to perform when I attend the Southern Conferences. If I had not believed it in 1824, I could not have accepted the charge committed to me, when I was made one of the superintendents of the whole Church, including slaves and their masters. Not that they claim or exercise all the rights over their servants that the laws are intended to give them ; this their Discipline, their conscience, their religion and their Bible forbid ; but they claim and exercise only so many rights as the laws of justice and mercy require. The law of Virginia forbids emancipating any slave after he is forty or forty-five years old, and even renders the thing impossible. What, then, can the Methodists in that State do with their slaves who are over that age, but hold them, and act toward them according to the Saviour's rule ? In several of the Southern States, if a slave is emancipated, and is not out of the State in a short time, the civil officer is required by law to take him and sell him at public vendue to the highest bidder.

"I have conversed freely and frequently with many of our members in several different States, and their answer has been in substance this—'We cannot set our slaves free without injuring them, for they would go into worse hands, or into a worse condition. It would not be doing as we would be done by.' And I believed them, and you would believe them if you knew them as well as I do. Will you say they do not all act up to this rule ? That may be, but some do ; and that is a good reason why you should not condemn them all as sinners. Our members in the North do not all act up to that rule, even in buying and selling, and in the treatment of hired servants and day laborers. That, indeed, is a cause of lamentation, but not a reason for condemning all the people as sinners. Our people in the South have experienced the same religion you have, and many of them love our blessed Lord and Saviour as well as you do, and are willing to do and suffer as much for the cause of Christ as you are ; and I am

not authorized to be the instrument of passing conference resolutions which even imply that they are all sinners. Many of those people are also well enlightened, and yet they really believe it is their duty, considering the laws and other circumstances under which they live, to hold, govern and protect the slaves they have inherited from their fathers, as you believe it is your duty to hold, govern and protect your sons at the age of eighteen or twenty. They believe that to emancipate their slaves would be breaking the rule, do as you would be done by. Some of them may err in judgment; if so, we cannot convince them by censuring them here—other means must be used, if ever they are convinced. But that they are wrong in principle, cannot be proved, unless you can produce a precept of the Divine law equal to this, thus saith the Lord, ‘ THOU SHALT NOT OWN A SLAVE.’ But this precept is not in the Bible.

“ There may be hypocrites among those brethren who hold slaves for gain, or who treat them unjustly and cruelly. Let them be condemned with the sinners—let them be expelled from the Church; but do not condemn the righteous with the wicked, nor grieve those whom God has not grieved.

“ Will you say slavery is condemned in the parts which compose it? This is true of the slave-trade, of the system, and of all the injustice and cruelty inflicted on the slaves; but it is not true in circumstances where the best possible thing a man can do for his slave is to hold, protect, feed and govern him. Will you say, ‘ Undo every burden, and let the oppressed go free?’ But the people I have described are not oppressed by their owners. If their present owners should set them free, they would be oppressed by others. They are now held to protect them from oppression; and to own them is the only way to protect them.

“ The Methodists in that country are few and feeble in comparison with the multitude; they cannot change the laws and the circumstances which render it necessary, in their estimation at least, to keep their slaves, any more than you can change or repeal the laws which permit making, importing and vending ardent spirits.

“ In the year 1784, when our Church was organized, there were both preachers and private members in her communion who owned slaves, and I believe there never has been a day since but some such have been found among us. Some of the greatest revivals we have ever had were in the slave states, and those at times when we were receiving slave owners into the church; teaching those who could put away their slaves on our Lord’s rule, to do so; and also teaching those who could not *thus* release them, to conduct toward them as the Savior directed.”

Such are the opinions of Bishop Hedding. He believes slaveholding may be justified by the "golden rule;" and argues that Methodists hold slaves according to this rule. The design in this work is to record facts, without in all cases pausing to comment upon them. The best comment upon these extracts, as indicating the views of the writer, may be to quote the following remarks respecting the New England Conference for 1838 :

"**THE CLOSING SCENE.**—A few minutes before the journal was read, previous to the close of the late session of the New England Conference, the Rev. C. Scott arose in his place, and offered the following preamble and resolution, stating at the same time, that they were precisely the same that were adopted by the Pittsburg Conference, at its last session, Bishop Roberts in the chair :—

" 'Whereas the rule which prohibits the buying and selling of men, women and children, with an intention to enslave them, has recently been subjected to various constructions, not only differing from each other, but in the judgment of many of the ministers of our Church, neutralizing the force and bearing of this plain and important rule : We, therefore, consider it a privilege, and above all our bounden duty to offer the following resolution as the sense of this conference respecting the rule in question :—

" '*Resolved*, That, in the judgment of this Conference, *all traffic* in the souls and bodies of our fellow men, *under any circumstances*, which either originates or perpetuates *slavery*, is a direct violation both of the spirit and letter of our general rule on this subject.'

" Brother Scott, in a very few remarks, urged the adoption of the above preamble and resolution, especially as there could be no valid objection against the New England Conference's adopting a resolution on this subject, which had already been adopted by another conference of the same church. However, Bishop Hedding refused to put the question for the adoption of the above.

" Brother Scott then offered the following, stating that they were the same resolutions which Bishop Hedding *himself* had put for adoption at the last session of the Genesee Conference, and which were adopted by that body nearly unanimously —

" '*First*, That in the judgment of this Conference, our Discipline in declaring that slavery is a *great evil* is to be understood as pronouncing not upon its civil and political, so much as upon its *moral* character.'

" '*Second*; That the buying and selling of men, women and children, with an intention to enslave them, are terms, that in their obvious import, relate as well to the internal as to the foreign traffic

in human beings, so that the buying and selling of men, women and children, with an intention either to originate or perpetuate their enslavement, is a violation of the disciplinary interdict.'

"But Bishop Hedding refused to put the motion for the adoption of these also, stating that *he* was not certain they were the same which had been adopted by the Genesee Conference, and he had not time then to examine them.

"In a few minutes after, the journal for the day was read, and on perceiving that the secretary had not recorded the refusal of the chair to put those resolutions, the mover expressed a wish to have it entered upon the journals. This request was also refused by the chair, for the want of time! These refusals were the more *afflicting*, as the mover of the resolutions had been at the early part of the session twice refused the privilege of presenting a number of memorials on the same subject to the Conference, for the *want of time*. Finding himself denied of his last request, brother Scott took his seat, exclaiming in a tone of suppressed grief, 'I am grieved—I feel *oppressed* by these proceedings.'

"Upon which Bishop Hedding immediately called upon him to close the Conference by singing and prayer. He declined. Brother Horton was then called on, and he arose and gave out—

'Come on, my partners in distress,
My comrades through this wilderness,
Who still your bodies feel.
Awhile forget your griefs and fears,
And look beyond this vale of tears
To that celestial hill.'

"The whole hymn was never sung, perhaps, when it was more appropriate to the feelings of the persons by whom it was chaunted."

It is quite possible that abolitionists might mistake the character of the sentiments and conduct of the Bishops, as above noted. By declaring that the Bishops are pro-slavery, it may be that they are in error. But if anti-slavery, their action would not be approved by the slaveholding conferences. Yet it was so approved. This demonstrates the correctness of the sentiment held by abolitionists. Read the following preamble and resolutions adopted in 1838 by the Georgia Annual Conference. Hear their opinions as to the character of slavery—and then notice their "profound respect and approbation" of the course pursued by the Bishops!

"Whereas there is a clause in the Discipline of our Church, which states that we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slav-

very—and whereas the said clause has been *perverted* by some, and used in such a manner as to produce the impression that the Methodist Episcopal Church believed *slavery* to be a *moral evil*,

"Therefore, Resolved, That it is the sense of the Georgia Annual Conference, that *slavery*, as it exists in the United States, is not a *moral evil*.

"Resolved, That we view *slavery* as a civil and domestic institution, and one with which as ministers of Christ we have nothing to do, further than to ameliorate the condition of the *slave* by endeavoring to impart to him and his master the benign influence of the religion of Christ, and aiding both on their way to heaven.

"On motion it was Resolved, unanimously, That the Georgia Annual Conference regard with feelings of profound respect and approbation, the dignified course pursued by our several superintendents or Bishops in suppressing the attempts that have been made by various individuals to get up and protract an excitement in the churches and country on the subject of *abolitionism*.

"Resolved further, That they shall have our cordial and zealous support in sustaining them in the ground they have taken."

The resolutions of the Georgia Conference are rather out of place in this connection. But they show how the action of the bishops sympathize with the opinion that "slavery is not a moral evil." It requires no great sagacity to discover this. Believing it to be a moral evil, would they deny the annual conferences the right of saying so? Surely not. If it is suggested that the opinions of the bishops have been misrepresented by these remarks—it is answered that for several years no Conference was allowed to say that slaveholding was a sin. The bishops, without an exception, refused to put every such resolution or sentiment to vote. And Bishop Hedding gives the very reason which has been assigned above. When speaking of holding slaves without being guilty of sin, he says: "If I did not believe this, I could not do the duties the Church requires me to perform, when I attend the Southern Conferences." "Our people in the South have experienced the same religion you have—and I am not authorized to be the instrument of passing Conference resolutions, which even imply that they are all sinners." This last remark gives the reason that was always assigned for opposing Conference action at the North. To the facts already given, it may be added, that in 1839, at the New England Conference, in Lynn, Mass., bishop Soule or Waugh refused to allow the candidates for full membership to answer the following questions from La Roy Sunderland—"Are you an aboli-

tionist?"—and "Do you acknowledge that slavery is contrary to the laws of God, man and nature, and hurtful to society; contrary to the dictates of conscience and pure religion, and doing that which we would not others should do to us and ours?" Two months before, at the Philadelphia Conference, the writer heard the following question asked of the candidates for admission, *with the consent of the presiding bishop*—"ARE YOU AN ABOLITIONIST?"—with the avowed purpose of rejecting them as such. The same Bishop (Bishop Waugh) refused to put a resolution against slavery to vote in the Maine Conference.

At the New England Conference for 1840, in Lowell; Orange Scott attempted to present a memorial from private members of the Church, asking the Annual Conference to express an opinion against the "colored testimony" resolution of the General Conference. But he was peremptorily forbidden even to read the memorial, by Bishop Soule, who presided. And as late as 1842, at the Springfield Conference, Bishop Waugh refused to allow a resolution to be put to vote, which said *slaveholding* was a sin. The mover of this was William Smith, since pastor of the Church street Church, Boston, now deceased. The writer will never forget the look of surprise and disappointment with which Bro. S. resumed his seat, on being repulsed by the Bishop, who only said, "I will not consent to put that resolution, and it is too late to give the reasons for refusing to entertain it." Meaning, it was supposed, that the standard opinions of the Church and the settled purpose of the Bishops, in favor of *slaveholding* under some circumstances, were too well known to need any explanation.

It is not assumed that every act of each individual bishop has been noted down and fully stated. But enough has been presented in their own language, to enable every candid mind to form an intelligent opinion of their real position, in respect to slavery and abolitionism. Of the remarks accompanying the quotations given, all are at liberty to judge. The official acts noted will, it is believed, establish the following assumptions respecting them. They put forth the earliest and most powerful opposition to the anti-slavery discussion;—by the "Pastoral Letter," in which they in-

voke presiding elders, preachers, trustees, and all official members to unite with them in putting down abolitionism;—by refusing to allow Annual Conferences the right or privilege of condemning slaveholding;—by advising all the members wholly to refrain from the anti-slavery discussion, through the General Conference; and then construing that “advice” as law, a violation of which involved the penalty of expulsion from the Church or ministry;—and finally, by arguing in defence of slaveholding, proving it to be, in their opinion, sometimes right by the law of God. All the Bishops have not done each of the acts specified, but all that is enumerated, has been done by Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church!

CHAPTER IV.

ACTION OF THE ANNUAL AND GENERAL CONFERENCES IN FAVOR OF SLAVERY, AND AGAINST ABOLITIONISM.

HOWEVER reluctant any may feel to accredit the fact, that the executive officers of the Church gave their influence against anti-slavery action, and in favor of slavery, it cannot be denied. It has been said, in extenuation of their course, that they only opposed an offensive form of action, without wishing or designing to favor slavery. If this was true, then their administration would give evidence of the fact, when resolutions were offered condemning *all* anti-slavery agitation. And more especially, when it was proposed in annual conferences, to apologize for and defend slavery. But in these cases not a word of dissent was uttered by them!

When northern conferences would have acted against slavery, the Bishops would not allow it, because they were responsible to the General Conference for the sentiments they allowed an annual conference to express on slavery. So said the Bishops. So let it be understood. They declared themselves unwilling to be responsible for the sentiments of anti-slavery-conferences, but they made

no objection whatever, to assume the responsibility of all that slaveholding conferences chose to say in favor of slavery ! If it be urged, that they were placed in this position involuntarily, from an unwillingness to come in collision with the southern conferences, then it will appear, that it is more congenial with their feelings to forego the exercise of Episcopal prerogatives in favor of slavery, than in opposition to it. For such a preference there can be no excuse but this—they do not believe slaveholders to be sinners. On this ground their conduct is justifiable.

With these remarks will be introduced to notice the action of various conferences against abolitionism, and in favor of slavery. The first, is the report of a committee of the Ohio Annual Conference. It deserves special attention from the fact, that the first two persons named are now Bishops in the Church. As the first annual conference action, it deserves notice. After presenting at length a report which argues in favor of colonization societies and against abolitionism, the report concludes in the following manner :

" There is one other view of the subject on which we shall barely touch, for the purpose of calling to it the attention of all interested, that they may examine it at their leisure. The 23d article of our religion, recognizes the Constitution of the United States as the parent of our civil relations, as the general rules of our civil conduct, and as determining our civil obligations ; and in the marginal note appended to the same, it is made our duty as Christian ministers, to use all laudable means to enjoin obedience to the powers that be. To this article all Methodists subscribe, by becoming members of the Church. Moreover the Constitution of the United States, to which it refers, implicitly secures to the Southern States the peaceable possession and right of control over their slaves, with which we of the free States have no right to interfere. Therefore, in our opinion, those high-handed measures of the abolitionists, which produce such excitement and alarm in the South, and that officious meddling of strangers with their domestic relations, which gives so much offence, are at war with the principles of the Constitution ; and consequently no Methodist can consistently advocate or approve their course.

" To sum up the whole briefly, and call the attention of the Conference to a few points more definitely, your committee beg leave to submit the following resolutions for adoption ; namely :

"Resolved, That as the friends of peaceable, gradual emancipation, we have no cause to regret the course which has been pursued by the Methodist Episcopal Church on the subject of slavery, as set forth in the Discipline, but retain undiminished confidence in the same."

* * * * *

"Resolved, That we deeply regret the proceedings of the abolitionists and anti-slavery societies in the free states, and the consequent excitement thereby produced in the slave states; that we, as a Conference, disclaim all connection and co-operation with, or belief in the same; and that we hereby recommend to our junior preachers, local brethren, and private members within our bounds, to abstain from any connection with them, or participation of their acts in the premises whatever."

"Resolved, That those brethren and citizens of the North, who resist the abolition movements with firmness and moderation, are true friends to the Church, to the slaves of the South, and to the constitution of our common country; and that to encourage inflammatory lectures by foreign agents, and sanguinary publications in favor of immediate abolition, is injurious to christian fellowship, dangerous to our civil associations, unfavorable to the privileges and spiritual interests of the slaves, and unbecoming any Christian patriot or philanthropist, and especially any Methodist."

"All of which is respectfully submitted.

T. A. MORRIS,
L. I. HAMLINE,
E. W. SIMON,* } Committee.

"Springfield, Ohio, August 25, 1835."

The following action was had in 1836, by the Baltimore Annual Conference. It is cited as evidence of the time-serving policy which was deemed necessary to quiet the public mind. Honor to whom it is due, however. They condemn slavery, though mildly.

"At a late meeting of the Baltimore Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, held in Baltimore, the following preamble and resolutions were unanimously adopted, and the names of all the members and probationers present, in number 157, were subscribed, and ordered to be published. The Secretary was also directed to furnish Rev. JNO. A. COLLINS with a copy for insertion in the *Globe and Intelligencer* of Washington City.

* Now in the "Church South." The others are Northern Bishops.

" WHEREAS, great excitement has pervaded this country for some time past on the subject of abolition ; and, whereas, such excitement is believed to be destructive to the best interests of the country and of religion : therefore,

" 1. *Resolved*, That 'we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery.'

" 2. That we are opposed in every part and particular to the proceedings of the abolitionists, which look to the immediate, indiscriminate, and general emancipation of slaves.

" 3. That we have no connection with any press, by whomsoever conducted, in the interest of the abolition cause.

" *Resolved*, That the foregoing preamble and resolutions, signed by the members of this Conference, be sent to the editors of the Christian Advocate and Journal, N. Y., Western Christian Advocate, Cincinnati, Zion's Herald, Boston, and Christian Sentinel, of Richmond, for publication in those papers.

" A true copy, with the omission of the names.

" THOMAS B. SARGENT, *Secretary.*"

The same year, the New York Conference came up to the work, and adopted the following Report, which was prepared and read by Dr. Bangs.

" The Committee to whom was referred the subject of abolitionism, beg leave to Report :—

" That having deliberated together on this subject, they are of the opinion that it is the duty of the members of this Conference, wholly to refrain from all abolition measures and movements, as being incompatible with their duty as ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ, and as promoters of the peace and welfare of the Church to which they belong. They, therefore, recommend to the Conference the adoption of the following Resolutions :—

" *Resolved*, That this Conference fully concur in the advice of the late General Conference, as expressed in their pastoral address in the following words :—

" [The part of the Pastoral Address here referred to is on page 43. This resolution binds the members of the Conference, in the language of the Address, 'WHOLLY to refrain from this agitating subject.]'

" *Resolved*, That we disapprove of the members of this Conference patronizing, or in any way giving countenance to a paper called 'Zion's Watchman,' because, in our opinion, it tends to disturb the peace and harmony of the body, by sowing dissension in the Church.

"*Resolved*, That although we would not condemn any man, or withhold our suffrages from him on account of his *opinions*, merely, in reference to the subject of abolitionism, yet we are decidedly of the opinion that *none ought to be elected to the office of a deacon or elder in our CHURCH, UNLESS he give a PLEDGE* to the Conference that he [will *refrain from agitating* the Church with discussions on this subject, and the more especially as the one premises 'reverently to obey them to whom the charge and government over him is committed, following with a glad mind and will their godly admonitions,' and the other, with equal solemnity, promises to 'maintain and set forward, as much as lieth in him, quietness, peace, and love among all Christian people, and especially among them that are or shall be committed to their charge.' All which is respectfully submitted.

"D. OSTRANDER, *Chairman.*"

At a subsequent session of the same Conference, they resolved,

"That in the judgment of this Conference, it is incompatible with the duty which its members owe to the Church, as its ministers, for them to be engaged in attending anti-slavery conventions, delivering abolition lectures, or forming anti-slavery societies, either in or out of the Church, or in any way agitating the subject so as to disturb the peace and harmony of the Church, and that they be, and hereby are affectionately advised and admonished to refrain from all these things."

It would appear from these doings, that abolitionism was a much more alarming evil than slavery. Conference action was necessary to oppose the first, while slavery was to be let alone. Or, if touched upon, it must be in justification or defence. Thus we find the Baltimore Conference declaring in 1837, respecting the slave-trade,—

"That in all cases of administration, under the general rule in reference to 'buying and selling men, women and children,' &c., it be and is hereby recommended to all committees as the sense and opinion of this Conference—that the said rule be taken, construed, and understood so as not to make the guilt or innocence of the accused to depend upon the simple fact of purchase or sale of any such slave or slaves, but upon the attendant circumstances of cruelty, injustice, or inhumanity, on the one hand, or those of kind purposes or good intentions on the other, under which the transactions shall have been perpetrated; and farther, it is recommended that in all such cases the charge be brought for immorality,

and let the circumstances be adduced as specifications under that charge."

The opinions of the Georgia Annual Conference have already been quoted. They are copied in part here, with accompanying remarks:—

" WHEREAS there is a clause in the Discipline of our Church which states that we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of *slavery*; and, whereas the said clause has been *perverted* by some, and used in such a manner as to produce the impression that the Methodist Episcopal Church believed *slavery* to be a *moral evil*—

" Therefore, *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Georgia Annual Conference, that slavery, as it exists in the United States, is *not a moral evil*.

" *Resolved*, That we view *slavery* as a civil and domestic institution, and one with which, as ministers of Christ, we have nothing to do, further than to ameliorate the condition of the slave, by endeavoring to impart to him and his master the benign influences of the religion of Christ, and aiding both on their way to heaven."

The editor of the Pittsburgh Conference Journal, a Methodist Episcopal paper, copied these resolutions, adding the following remarks—

" What a pity it is that the Methodist Episcopal Church did not long ago make the grand discovery now made by the Georgia brethren! It is certainly mortifying to think that the Church has been for so many years solemnly inquiring what shall be done for the '*EXTIRPATION*' of a mere 'civil and domestic institution,' that has no moral evil in it. But is it not somewhat strange that the Georgia Conference, having '*nothing to do*' with this domestic institution, but '*to ameliorate the condition* of the slave, by endeavoring to impart to him and his master the benign influences of the religion of Christ,' should, nevertheless, so gravely legislate upon it."

A correspondent of Zion's Herald, of Boston, writing from the South, without reference to these resolutions, gives in a few words the true reason, which doubtless induced this action,—says this correspondent:

" The Georgia Conference occupies a commanding and influen-

tial position in the society of that State: one in which its members may, and do, achieve much good. But it is one which has its difficulties too. For the very fact that they stand in such affinity to the leading and influential men in the State, subjects them continually to a strong influence from the opinion of the public,—more so than any body of ministers I have ever known. It is this fact, which produces the extreme sensitiveness on some matters of domestic policy and political doctrines. I say these things by no means to censure them, but merely as facts which have fallen under my notice, or as inferences drawn from those facts. No man not similarly situated, can tell how he would act. All judicious men would require some time for reflection, before they would be willing to array themselves openly against all the leading men in the community, on matters of a political nature."

The South Carolina Conference followed in the wake of Georgia, at its session in Columbia, (S. C.) January 18, 1839. The subjoined account was published in the Southern Christian Advocate.

" On the last day of the session, Jan. 18, Rev. W. Martin introduced resolutions in favor of slavery, similar to those passed by the Georgia Conference.

" Brother Dannelly approved of the doctrine of the resolutions, but remarked on the inconsistency of any action of conference on a subject which was avowed to be foreign from its province. He also brought to view the mischievous use which might be made of it in some parts of the country, where some sought to take up the time, and pervert the business of conference with debates of abolition.

" Brother W. Capers expressed a conviction that the sentiment of the resolution was universally held, not only by the *ministers of this conference, but of the whole South.* Still he acknowledged the force of the remark made by brother Dannelly; and would willingly do nothing which might ever be perverted into a pretext for the mischievous discussions which were going on in another quarter. The doctrine, and the only true doctrine, was, 'It belongs to Caesar, and not to the church.' But the subject, right or wrong, had got into the church. He would suggest to the mover of these resolutions, whether it might not be better, all things considered, to adopt the following substitute:

" Whereas, we hold that the subject of slavery in these United States is not one proper for the action of the church, but is exclusively appropriate to the civil authorities, therefore,

" Resolved, That this Conference will not intermeddle with it,

farther than to express our regret that it has ever been introduced, in any form, into any one of the judicatures of the Church.

" ' Brother Martin accepted the substitute.

" ' Brother Betts asked whether the substitute was intended as implying that slavery, as it exists among us, was not a moral evil? He understood it as equivalent to such a declaration.

" ' Brother Capers explained, that his intention was to convey that sentiment fully and unequivocally: and that he had chosen the form of the substitute for the purpose, not only of reprobating some wrong doings at the North, but with reference also to the General Conference. If slavery were a moral evil, (that is, sinful,) the Church would be bound to take cognizance of it; but our affirmation is, that it is not a matter for her jurisdiction, but is exclusively appropriate to the civil government, and of course not sinful.'

" This substitute was unanimously adopted, with this explanation."

From what has been already adduced, the position of the Church may be very easily determined. Although out of place in the order of time, a notice of the General Conference proceedings will now claim attention. At the General Conference of 1836, at Cincinnati, the following preamble and resolutions were offered on the 12th of May, by Rev. S. G. Roszell, of the Baltimore Conference, and adopted:

" Whereas, great excitement has pervaded this country on the subject of modern abolitionism, which is reported to have been increased in this city recently, by the unjustifiable conduct of two members of the General Conference, in lecturing upon and in favor of that agitating topic;—and whereas, such a course on the part of any of its members is calculated to bring upon this body the suspicion and distrust of the community, and misrepresent its sentiments in regard to the point at issue;—and whereas, in this aspect of the case, a due regard for its own character, as well as a just concern for the interests of the church confided to its care, demand a full, decided and unequivocal expression of the views of the General Conference in the premises, therefore,

" 1. *Resolved*, By the delegates of the Annual Conferences in General Conference assembled, that they disapprove, in the most unqualified sense, the conduct of the two members of the General Conference, who are reported to have lectured in this city recently, upon and in favor of modern abolitionism.—Yea 122, nays 11.

"2. Resolved, By the delegates of the annual conferences in General Conference assembled,—that they are decidedly opposed to modern abolitionism, and wholly disclaim any right, wish, or intention, to interfere in the civil and political relation between master and slave, as it exists in the slaveholding States of this Union." Yeas 120, nays 14."

"Two remarks only are necessary to place the pro-slavery position of the Conference before the mind of the candid reader.

"1. The relation here named is slavery itself. While this relation exists, slavery must exist; when this relation is dissolved, slavery will cease to exist. No attempt can be made in any way to abolish slavery without interfering with this relation.

"2. With this relation the Methodist Episcopal Church declared, in the above resolution, that she has no right, wish, or intention to interfere. Now as the relation is slavery itself, and as no attempt can be made to abolish slavery without interfering with that relation, it follows that the Methodist Episcopal Church is not seeking the abolition of slavery, unless they are trying to do what they say they have no right to do, what they have no wish to do, what they have no intention of doing. This settles the question that the Church is not and cannot be anti-slavery. But again, as the relation is slavery itself, and as the Church says she has no right, wish, or intention of interfering with it, it follows that she does not believe it wrong, but on the other hand justifies and sanctions it in the language of the question, or else the Church acknowledges that she has no right, wish, or intention of interfering with what she believes to be wrong."—*Luther Lee*.

The conclusion thus fairly deduced, is not only arrived at by abolitionists, but also by slaveholders. Soon after the General Conference of 1836, a pamphlet was published in Louisiana, the author and the subject of which are thus spoken of, by James Gillespie Birney, now of Michigan, then editing a newspaper:

"Judge Lewis is a District Judge of the State of Louisiana. He is a man of intelligence, as his writings show, and defends a bad cause with more candor and good temper, than are common in such defences. This pamphlet is published by the Conservative Society of citizens of Louisiana. It may be supposed therefore to be a fair representation of the feelings and sentiments of slaveholders generally in that state. Let us hear then, what they think of the proceedings of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, at its last session."

"The Judge, after having endeavored to prove that slavery under the Jewish dispensation was, 'in every particular, essentially the same as it exists' in the South at this time; that this system was clearly and expressly allowed by the divine law; that this law still continues in force under the Christian dispensation; and that therefore 'slavery as it exists in our country,' at this day, is not sin, says:—

"To this let me add, that the relation of master and slave, is clearly one of *the relations of civil society*, and the whole tenor of the New Testament shows, that neither our Saviour nor his apostles, ever intended to abolish or change any of those civil relations. All their laws—all the principles they have given to us, go to regulate our moral conduct *in these relations*, leaving the relations as they then were. In this I am glad to find that I am sustained by the resolution of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, passed at their late session in Cincinnati, a resolution passed in view of the very question now in hand."

After quoting the preamble and resolutions already before the reader, he remarks,—

"Now it is believed, that abolitionists themselves will not deny, that in that body, there are many men of profound and extensive learning, who are deeply versed in the Scriptures, and whose piety is as deep and sincere, as that of any others to be found, in any denomination of Christians whatever. They have, too, the advantage of coming from all parts of the Union;—many of them from the slaveholding States, where they reside, and have long been eye witnesses of the state of society, have seen slavery as it does really exist in our country. Such men, surely, are competent to judge correctly in this, if any men on earth are. But these men do not condemn slavery, *as a sin*, taken *as it exists in our country*. On the contrary they imitate their divine Master by 'wholly disclaiming,' as his disciples, any right or wish, or intention to interfere in the relation between master and slave,' which they consider, as it really is,—one of the established '*civil and political*' *relations* of society in our country,—one which, *as Christians*, they have no right to disturb. I CAN BUT CONSIDER THIS, AS AN INVALUABLE TESTIMONY IN OUR FAVOR, and no less so, in favor of the cause of humanity. IT IS A TESTIMONY THEY COULD NOT HAVE GIVEN; IF THEY HAD CONSIDERED THAT SLAVERY, AS IT EXISTS AMONG US, IS A SIN. I consider it indeed as bearing me out in all the positions I have taken."

If the action of the General Conference had been called forth

only in expressions of disapprobation against the movements of a class of abolitionists, whom they might judge to be imprudent in their measures, it would be less exceptionable. But it did not stop there. We have already seen in the address prepared by the Bishops, and adopted by the General Conference, as quoted in a previous chapter, that all are admonished "wholly to refrain." And they embraced the opportunity afforded by the attendance of the two brethren at an anti-slavery meeting in Cincinnati, to associate with the censure of their conduct not only a condemnation of "modern abolitionism"—but they go further, and unequivocally commit themselves to the cause of slavery, by saying, that they "wholly disclaim any right, wish or intention, to interfere in the civil and political relation between master and slave, as it exists in the slaveholding States of this Union."

From the disposition of mind here developed, none ought to be surprised, perhaps, at any degree of sensitiveness, which may be manifested by the Church on this question. But it was hardly to be expected, that a kind admonition from the Wesleyan Methodists in England, would be received ungraciously—treated disrespectfully, and replied to with evident dissatisfaction. Yet such was the fact. At this session of the General Conference, an address was presented by Rev. William Lord, from the Wesleyan Connection. The following are extracts on the subject of slavery :

"It has already come to your knowledge, as a matter of public notoriety, that by the blessing of God on the efforts and influence of our connection, and on the combined endeavors of the religious public of our beloved country, a great measure for the emancipation of the slaves in all the territories of Great Britain was eventually conducted to a successful issue in the Imperial Legislature; and has since been carried into practical effect in all the colonies of the empire, with various degrees of completeness, but universally with safety and advantage, and with results which mightily encourage us to go forward in our earnest attempts to enlighten and evangelize the whole population to which favorable access is thus freely opened.

"Our American brethren will doubtless allow us the fraternal liberty to express our conviction, that GREAT SCRIPTURAL PRINCIPLES ARE OPPOSED to the continuance of Slavery in a Christian

state; that the permission of it is one of those *deviations* from *natural equity* and *evangelical purity*, which call for further deviations to abet and maintain them; that it is CONTRARY to the *precepts* of CHRISTIANITY, and VIOLATES and COUNTERACTS the *principles* and *obligations* by which the gospel urges those precepts. We trust that your connection, having already begun to RESIST and CONDEMN this *baneful system*, will, in its own way, be freely and providentially led to such practical steps as shall produce a *consentaneous opinion*, feeling and purpose, amongst your own people, and will then have the glory of the public opinion of your great and increasing population, to such decided views as will result in a *unanimous rejection of slavery* and its social mischiefs, on the ground of its *repugnancy to the laws of Christ*.

* * * * *

Signed in behalf, and by order of the Conference,

RICHARD REESE, President.

ROBERT NEWTON, Secretary.

Sheffield, August 18, 1835.

Of the reception of this document, a member of the General Conference thus writes, under date of May 3, 1836:

"The time has been mostly taken up to-day, in the passage of various resolutions, and the appointment of committees; we had, however, the address from the Wesleyan Conference, presented yesterday, read:—a very interesting document indeed. It speaks of the satisfaction they feel, that there is beginning to be a movement in our Church on the subject of slavery. Instead of calling the abolitionists in our Church 'fanatics,' they express high satisfaction that some of us are awake to this subject. As the whole document will probably be printed, I forbear making any further remarks upon it. Brother Orange Scott moved that it be printed in the Christian Advocate and Journal, and the Western Christian Advocate. Some discussion took place on this proposition being introduced, in which several took part.

"A committee was appointed by the Bishops to draft a reply to the Address from the Wesleyan Conference, consisting of Dr. Bangs, T. A. Morris, and Dr. Capers, and we are to wait till they make their report, to see whether the reply will answer, instead of appended 'notes' to the English Address, in going out to the world through our 'official organs.' Brother Scott's motion to print, therefore, lays over till the reply can be forthcoming."

On the following day the committee reported. So much of their report as relates to slavery is here quoted. The whole address was

signed by the Bishops, and forwarded to the Wesleyan Conference in England. It says :

" In common with sister denominations of Christians in our country, we have been less or more agitated with the perplexing question of negro slavery. And although we receive with respectful deference what you, our elder brethren, have said to us in relation to this question, yet we are assured, that, from the known prudence by which your body has ever been distinguished, had you been as well acquainted with this subject as we are—could you have viewed it in all its aspects, as it presents itself to us, who are in the midst of it, interwoven as it is in many of the state constitutions, and left to their disposal by the civil compact which binds us together as a nation, and thus put beyond the power of legislation by the general government, as well as the control of ecclesiastical bodies—could you have critically analyzed its various ramifications in our country, so as to have perceived all its delicate relations to the Church, to the several States, and to the government of the United States, we cannot doubt that, while expressing your decided disapprobation of the system of slavery itself, your tone of sympathy for us would have been deeper and more pathetic."

There is not in the entire document, any response to the strong views of slavery, and its condemnation, which the Wesleyan address sets forth. It complains of their "tone of sympathy," arguing, that the position of the Methodist Episcopal Church, respecting slavery in this country, is one which they are compelled to take, on account of "the civil compact which binds us together as a nation." It asserts that slavery is by this means "put beyond the power of legislation by the general government, as well as the control of ecclesiastical bodies." On this ground the General Conference claims a "deeper and more pathetic sympathy," than the Wesleyans tender to them. But these assumptions are incorrect. The "civil compact" does not put slavery "beyond the power of legislation, by the general government," nor beyond "the control of ecclesiastical bodies." This will be made to appear from an examination of the "compact." Two truths will contradict the above assumptions. First, The compact provides expressly for the power to legislate on slavery by the general government. And secondly, There is no where to be found, in the constitutions of the Nation and the various States, any provision that would put it beyond the control of ecclesiastical bodies. Consider the facts,—

Slavery in this nation presents itself in three different aspects. First, as it exists in the national domain, and at the very seat of government. Secondly, as it is developed in the accursed slave-trade or commerce, between the various slaveholding States. And finally, as it is found "interwoven in many of the State constitutions." Of the last, all agree that it is beyond the power of the general government. But of the first and second, it is now observed:

The "civil compact" or Constitution of the United States, in article 3, of section viii., gives to the general government, power "To regulate commerce among the several States." One of the three palpable forms in which slavery exists is, the abominable traffic or "commerce among the several States," in the bodies and souls of men, women and children. Therefore, the general government has power to legislate on the subject of slavery.

Again, the Constitution, in article 17 of section viii., gives to the general government "exclusive legislation, in all cases whatsoever," over the District of Columbia, including Washington City, Georgetown, Jackson, and part of Alexandria. Slavery exists here, and the slave trade is carried on to the disgrace of the nation, under the very shadow of the Capitol, by virtue of the laws of the general government. The power by which slavery was created in the national domain is sufficient to abolish and destroy it. Therefore, it is again repeated, that the general government has power to legislate on this subject. Let this power be exerted, and the example of the District of Columbia as free soil, with the effect of the abolition of the slave trade between the States, would operate effectually and speedily to overthrow the entire system. Indeed, a conviction of this truth lies at the bottom of all the opposition which Southerners make to the efforts of abolitionists to procure the above results. These remarks have been made, because the plea here noticed, has been frequently urged as a reason for inaction, and to disprove the charge of being pro-slavery. This feeble pretext, however, is both foolish and false.

Of ecclesiastical bodies it may be remarked briefly; that in this

* Alexandria was ceded back to Virginia in 1847.

country, their influence upon the body of the people is immediate and forcible. And the identity of the people with the government, gives to ecclesiastical bodies a control that is unparalleled in any part of the world. The power of the members of the Methodist Church over slavery is well set forth by the testimony of Dr. Wm. A. Smith of the Virginia Conference. Speaking of a conversation he had with Dr. Bond, editor of the Christian Advocate and Journal, who had apologized for Methodist slaveholders, because of the necessity they were under, from the laws of the States, he says :

" I told him (Dr. Bond) that Southern Methodists concurred in making the laws, (perpetuating slavery,) voluntarily did so, as far as the system itself was concerned, and that in Virginia, particularly, they could not avail themselves of the benefit of his apology. Because so strong is the non-slaveholding interest, that at any time when the membership of the Church shall unite their votes with the non-slaveholders in Western Virginia, particularly, they are competent to overturn the whole system. But that we did not do so, because we considered it our solemn Christian duty to sanction and sustain the system under it present unavoidable circumstances."

With this notice of the excuse offered by the Methodist Episcopal Church, to the Wesleyan Connection, it will be proper to pass now to their answer. It will be evident that they looked upon the plea presented to them, in its true light. They regarded it as a departure from the principles of truth and right, and a resort to criminal expediency as the rule of action. Their renewed testimony is worthy of record. It will repay a careful perusal. Read it then. It is quite probable that some of their remarks were prompted by the fact, that when it was moved in the General Conference to take up their first address from the table, with a view of ordering it published, 59 voted for it and 59 against it, and it was not taken up nor published! No action could have been less respectful in appearance than this.

"Answer of the British Methodist Conference, to the Address from the American Methodist General Conference, published in the 'Minutes of Conference,' 1836.

" We regret that the allusion in our epistle of last year to the subject of slavery should have occasioned you either pain or embar-

rassment. We claimed no right to suggest any thing to you on this confessedly difficult question, beyond what our fraternal relationship would warrant ; a privilege of friendship which we should as freely concede to you as exercise ourselves ; and we utterly disclaim all responsibility for any other kind of foreign interference with your views and feelings, which may have been exerted from any other quarter. We were aware, dear brethren, of the peculiar trials to which the evils of slavery had subjected you ; and our sympathy with you was most sincere. But being called upon to address you at a time when the blessings of emancipation had been secured to our own slave population, and when the question, as we knew, occupied much public attention in America, especially amongst religious men, we considered it our duty to give our moral weight in support of those views which were held by our great Founder ; which have repeatedly been professed by the British Conference ; and which, indeed, have been for many years avowed in your own Book of Discipline and other public documents, and are, we believe, in strict accordance with our merciful and righteous Christianity. Into the details of any measures of emancipation, we did not enter ; but, in conformity with our well-known sentiments, we intended to affirm the principle, that slavery is a system of oppressive evil, and is in direct opposition to the spirit of our divine religion ; and we hoped that the time had arrived, when our beloved sister-connection in America would be prepared to act on these sentiments, and receive our suffrages with approving cordiality. Slavery, in itself, is so obviously opposed to the immutable principles of justice, to the inalienable rights of man of whatever color or condition, to the social and civil improvement and happiness of the human family, to the principles and precepts of Christianity, and to the full accomplishment of the merciful designs of the Gospel, that we cannot but consider it the duty of the Christian Church to bear an unequivocal testimony against a system which involves so much sin against God, and so much oppression and wrong, inflicted on an unoffending race of our fellow men.

" In common with others, the Wesleyan Conference, and generally the people of their charge, took this course during the discussion of the question of emancipation in our own beloved country. The force of Christian principle, peaceably but firmly maintained, and legitimately urged, has overcome every difficulty. The black and colored population of our own colonies have entered into a state of freedom ; and the inestimable advantages of religious liberty have been secured on the basis of an equal toleration. The Conference has the means of knowing that the blessing of God has been graciously vouchsafed to this act of national justice, in the ex-

tension of the Gospel, in the conversion of great numbers of the negroes, and in the improved state of society in the colonies.

" As it must always be the duty of Christian ministers and churches, not only to embody the principles of their holy religion in their formularies of doctrine and codes of discipline, but also to *act upon them*, the Wesleyan Conference of this country trust that their American brethren may be enabled, by the constant avowal of the great principle of emancipation, to direct and urge forward their people to unite in the truly Christian enterprise of conferring upon the slave population of the United States the inestimable benefits of civil and religious freedom.

" In assuming the right of mildly, but firmly, pressing such sentiments on public attention, the Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America cannot, any more than ourselves, be chargeable with an inconsistent zeal. Whilst the Methodist Connection in England zealously concurred in adopting measures to secure the emancipation of the slaves in the West Indies, they at the same time supported one of the most extended and expensive Missions of modern times, in order to prepare them for the boon. We are aware that our brethren in America have, in like manner, by their itinerant and missionary labors, done much in conferring the blessings of religious instruction on the slave population of their country ; and surely the men who have thus laid the foundation for a peaceful state of society, founded on freedom, cannot but have the right to recommend and support all proper and lawful measures for the consummation of their own great work.

" But in addition to these inferior considerations, the Conference cannot but avow its conviction that in all cases it is most safe, and in the end most advantageous, that Christian churches should act on the principle of *religious* obligation and duty. And although it deeply deplores that the Methodists of the United States should be exposed to inconvenience, obloquy, or danger, by the assertion of right sentiments, on this subject ; yet as the evil of slavery does exist there,—as they are brought into immediate contact with it,—as they are called, in the order of Divine Providence, to maintain their long-published and scriptural testimony against it, even in the midst of this state of things,—and as the progress of events renders it impossible, even if it were lawful, that they should be neutral,—the British Conference trusts that it will not be considered as in any way exceeding the privileges of the fraternal relation existing between the two parties, when it expresses its anxious and earnest hope that our American brethren will feel it their duty, in union with other Christians, to adopt such measures as may lead to the safe and speedy emancipation of the whole slave population of their great and interesting country."

The "anxious and earnest hope" expressed, was never realized. So far from uniting with other Christians, in promoting the work of "speedy emancipation," the authorities of the Church, as we have already seen, set themselves in array against all agitation of the subject. And those of the preachers and members who engaged in this work were assailed by the official organs as enemies to society, and traitors to the Church. A history of the movement in detail, is reserved for a future chapter.

During the four years preceding the General Conference of 1840, several of the annual conferences expressed sentiments on the subject of slavery, in direct opposition to the Discipline and general rules. As the doings of the annual conferences are all submitted to the General Conference for approval or condemnation, it was confidently expected by many, that the abovenamed conferences would be admonished, if not rebuked, for their departure from what it was believed Methodism taught. This seemed the more probable, from the fact that the eyes of the Wesleyan Connection were now fixed on them, and that they would probably send over a delegate, who would be present to see and know what they did. But the expectation was a vain one. The action of that body on the resolutions of the Georgia and South Carolina Conferences are thus stated by a member of the General Conference:

"The General Conference has sanctioned both these resolutions, and passed them both, to all intents and purposes, by its act of approval. That body approved them both, by a direct vote; hence these resolutions have become the resolutions of the whole Church. Mark this!

"The Discipline requires (see p. 25) that the journals containing the proceedings of each annual conference be sent to the General Conference. The General Conference appoints a committee of one from each annual conference, to whom all the annual conference journals are referred for examination, and, if anything be found Anti-Methodistic, to report the same to the General Conference, to be censured or disposed of as that body may determine. The General Conference of 1840, had the journals of these conferences before them, as also those of the other annual conferences. This committee made a report, dated June 1, 1840, in which the New Hampshire, New England and Oneida Conferences were censured by name, and some others without naming them;

but no complaint was whispered against the Georgia or South Carolina Conferences. While this report was under consideration, Bro. Dodge, of the Genesee Conference, offered the following amendment, condemnatory of the Georgia resolution. He thought that, as the action of several conferences had received animadversion, impartiality required that there should be uniformity of treatment. He therefore moved to amend the Report by adding :—
‘The action of the Georgia Conference, in declaring that slavery, as it exists in these United States, is not a moral evil, contradicts the sense of the *general rule* and the tenth section of the Discipline on the subject, and is therefore irregular.’

“ This amendment was laid on the table, and the report of the committees approving of the acts and doings of the Georgia and South Carolina Conferences adopted by a direct vote. The journals of the Georgia Conference were approved by the General Conference, in full view of this resolution ; for Bro. Dodge asked the Conference to say that it was ‘irregular,’ and they would not do even that much. The General Conference approved of this resolution ; for they approved the journals, of which it was a part—the whole journals, without exception,—and to approve of the whole is to approve of all the parts ; for the whole contains all the parts. The Conference was asked to except to this part, and would not. This makes the case still stronger. And what is true of the Georgia Conference is also true of that of South Carolina, and of the Baltimore Conference, in the case we have noticed of buying and selling slaves. The General Conference has said just what these Conferences said, by approving and adopting what they said. The General Conference did say, in this case, that slavery, as it exists, not in the Methodist Episcopal Church, but in the United States, is *not* a moral evil, and when the General Conference said it, the Methodist Episcopal Church said it ; for that Conference is the mouth of the Church. This, all this, is as clear as demonstration can make any thing.”

But not only did the General Conference refuse to censure, and thus virtually approve and sanction what the annual conferences had done in favor of slavery, but it proceeded to act for slavery directly. The case under consideration was this :—

“ Rev. Silas Comfort (of the Missouri Conference) admitted a colored person to testify in a church trial against a white person. For this conduct a charge was brought against him, at the next annual conference, for *mal-administration*, and the conference sustained the charge, and condemned his administration as *mal*. He took an appeal to the General Conference, and when the case

came before that body, they entertained the appeal, and reversed the decision of the annual conference. Various motions were made, but finally the case was reconsidered and the appeal rejected, so that the action of the annual conference, pronouncing it *mal-administration* to admit the testimony of a colored person in a church trial, stood in full force. But further, to satisfy the offended dignity of the slaveholders, the following was adopted:—

“ *Resolved*, That it is highly inexpedient and unjustifiable for any preacher to permit colored persons to give testimony in church trials against white persons, in any State where they are denied that privilege by law.””

The character of this resolution is apparent from the fact, that it degrades the administration of the Church, by accommodating it to the vacillating policy of the unprincipled advocates and perpetrators of what is called by John Wesley, “ the sum of all villanies.” A more extended notice of the action last named, will be given, in a detail of the history of the efforts put forth by the friends of the slave, in order to recall the delinquent Church to her primitive position.

“ How are the mighty fallen ! ” Such is the involuntary exclamation, that must escape from the lips of every friend of pure religion, and every lover of humanity, in reviewing the facts that have passed before us. A brief recapitulation may be appropriate in this place. A compend of the facts will suffice. In her early history, the Methodist Church assumed an aspect of deadly hostility to American slavery. It prohibited all participation in the accursed thing by solemn legislation, and counselled its members and friends to labor for the extirpation of the system. Yielding, however, from motives of expediency, to relax its rigorous discipline for the present, a time-serving course gradually was adopted, which prepared the way for the admission of thousands, who had no sympathy with the anti-slavery principles of the Church. These, obtaining the control of its administration, and the entire economy of the Church, effaced the ancient landmarks of righteous antipathy to slavery, and brought it to bear, by a gradual process, in favor of this man-debasing, God-dishonoring system of robbery and wrong.

CHAPTER IV.

SENTIMENTS OF SEVERAL DISTINGUISHED CLERGYMEN FAVORING
SLAVERY—INSTANCE OF A NORTHERN SLAVEHOLDING PRESIDING
MEMBER.

The movements of all associated bodies are determined by the opinions of a small number, whose reputation and talents command respect. Individuals impress their character upon the mass; and may justly be held responsible for the far reaching consequences of mass movements, which they originated or neglected to prevent. Directed by this rule of action, it is not difficult to determine the question of responsibility in the Methodist E. Church. One fact confines observation to a comparatively small circumference. It is this. The laity have no voice in their ecclesiastical bodies, by whom the laws or rules of action are adopted. The clergy then are mainly responsible for the character of the denomination. Nor are we restricted to inference merely, respecting them. Plainly have they set forth their views on this subject. Boldly have they affirmed and defended opinions, equally at variance with the acknowledged standard writers of Methodism, and the inspired volume of religious truth. From the highest to the lowest, embracing every class of ministerial character, there are those to be found who have desiled their sacred vestments, and joined their hands in an unholy alliance with slavery, either by actual oppression or a voluntary defence of the iniquity in others. Passing over many who might be referred to in support of this sweeping charge, the following quotations are submitted, from the sentiments of those whose names are affixed. Read then the following, and learn the source of the opinions which control, to a great extent, the largest denomination in this country:

1st. "But it will be asked, What right has any member of our Church to own a slave? Or what right has the Church to allow them to hold slaves? The right to hold a slave is founded on this rule, 'Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should

do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.' "—*Bishop Hedding's Address on Slavery*.

2d. "When travelling in Georgia, an excellent man, a professor of religion, came to me with tears in his eyes, asking advice in relation to his slaves. The good brother stated, that he only waited for my advice, to emancipate them and take them to Ohio, where I lived, and purchase lands for them, and their children to locate on. I advised him not to liberate them, as they were better off with him, than in that State, as the laws existed there. I will now conclude with saying that I have never yet advised the liberation of a slave, and think I never shall!"—*Bishop Soule at the Pittsburg Conference, Washington, Pa., July, 1839.*

3d. "The general rule of Christianity not only permits, but in supposable circumstances, enjoins a continuance of the master's authority. In the primitive Christian Church at Colosse, under the apostolic eye, and with the apostolic sanction, the relation of master and slave was permitted to subsist. The New Testament enjoins obedience upon the slave as an obligation due to a present *rightful authority*."*—*Dr. Fisk, President Wesleyan University.*

4th. "It is very well known that slavery itself is no where expressly forbidden in the Scriptures, although the practice of slavery in its most oppressive forms, and in unmitigated severity, was universal during the time of our Lord and his apostles. Crucifixion was not an uncommon mode of inflicting the ultimate vengeance of the master. Yet there is no express prohibition to Christians to hold slaves. * * The buying a slave may be an act of great humanity, under certain circumstances, as well as the holding of those already in possession. And moreover we should be as much opposed to the introduction of a rule of discipline to expel from our communion all who bought a slave, whatever the motives might be, as we are to a rule to expel all slaveholders, under all circumstances."—*Dr. T. E. Bond, Editor Chris. Adv. & Journal, to Robert Boyd, 1840.*

5th. "I believe we are all prepared to recognize the right of Southern brethren to hold slaves under the provisions of the Discipline. We shall acknowledge and guaranty the entire of the privileges and immunities of all parties in the Church. I here declare, that if a remedy should be proposed that would trench on the constitutional claims of Southern ministers, I would not, to save the Church from any possible calamity, violate this great charter of our rights. I am glad of the opportunity of saying, that no man, who

* See Counter Appeal of 1837.

is a Methodist, and deserves a place among us, can call in question here any rights secured by our charter. I do not say that he may not be a very honest, or a very pious man, who doubts the compatibility of slaveholding on the conditions of the Discipline, with the ministerial office; but in this he is not a Methodist. He may be a *very good man*, but a *very bad Methodist*."

" Not only is holding slaves, on the conditions and under the restrictions of the Discipline, no disqualification for the ministerial office; but I will go a little farther, and say, that slaveholding is not constitutionally a forfeiture of a man's right, if he may be said to have one, to the office of a bishop.

" These are my principles. I have never doubted with regard to them. I will add, that I can never give a vote which does violence to my sentiments in regard to the religious aspect of the subject. I here declare, that, if I ever saw the graces of the Christian ministry displayed, or its virtues developed, it has been among slaveholders. I wish here to divest myself of what, to some, may seem an advantage that does not belong to me. I would not conceal—I avow that I was a slaveholder, and a minister at the South, and I never dreamed that my right to the ministry was questionable, or that in the sight of God I was less fitted to preach the Gospel on that account. And if the state of my health had not driven me away from that region, I should probably have been a slaveholder to this day. In this day of reform, and manifold suggestions, I go further, and say, that, if by a vote of this General Conference, you might call in question the right of our Southern brethren to the ministry, and make their claim to the sacred office dependent on their giving immediate freedom to their slaves, I do not think that that would be a blessing to the slaves or to the Church."—*Dr. S. Olin, President of Wesleyan University.—From Debates of General Conference, 1844, as reported in Adv. and Journal.*

6th. " From the Old Testament we have seen that property in men, however some may stare at it, was allowed; moreover, that slavery in some form existed, not only from the patriarchal day, but from time immemorial. That God not only permitted it, but absolutely provided for its perpetuity. That in the precepts of the New Testament, the relation of master and slave, is not only acknowledged, but remained undisturbed, each one having his appropriate duty pointed out; and that the rights of the master, as the owner of slave property, are protected by express law. The act of holding a slave then, under all circumstances, God being

judge, is not sin."—*Pres. Thomas C. Thornton, Centenary College, Miss. Conference.**

7th. "These extracts from HOLY WRIT, UNEQUIVOCALLY ASSERT THE RIGHT OF PROPERTY IN SLAVES, together with the usual incidents of that right; such as the power of acquisition and disposition in various ways, according to municipal regulations. The right to buy and sell, and to transmit to children by way of inheritance, is clearly stated. The only restriction on the subject, is in reference to the *market*, in which slaves or bondmen were to be purchased. Upon the whole, then, whether we consult the Jewish polity instituted by God himself; or the uniform opinion and practice of mankind in all ages of the world; or the injunctions of the New Testament and the Moral Law; we are brought to the conclusion, that slavery is not immoral. Having established the point, that the first African slaves were legally brought into bondage, the right to detain their children in bondage, follows as an indispensable consequence. Thus we see, that the slavery which exists in America, was *founded in right*."—*Prof. E. D. Simms, of Randolph Macon College, Virginia Conference.*

8th. "If slavery were a moral evil, that is, sinful, the Church would be bound to take cognizance of it; but our affirmation is, that it is not a matter for her jurisdiction, but is exclusively appropriate to the civil government, and of course not sinful."—*Dr. W. Capers at the South Carolina Conference, Columbia, January 18, 1839.*

9th. "It has been assumed, that slavery was wrong in some circumstances, in no circumstances, or in all circumstances. Now I design to prove from the brother's own admission, that slavery is right in *all* circumstances. It would be needless to refer to particular scriptures, but many passages do exist, which establish beyond controversy, that God did permit perpetual, hereditary slavery. This admitted, it is plain, that circumstances might deprive slavery of an immoral character. * * * I was not born in a slave State. I am a Pennsylvanian by birth. I was brought up to believe a slaveholder as great a villain as a horse-thief; but long residence at the South, has changed my views. I have become a slaveholder—a slaveholder on principle! * * * To obviate suspicion, and gain free access to the slave, so as to do him good, it is highly advantageous for a minister, that he himself should hold slaves; and I can see no impropriety, but advantage,

* Extract from a work by this gentleman, styled "An Enquiry into the History of Slavery." Published by Wm. H. Morrison, Washington, D. C. 1841.

in members, preachers, presiding elders and even bishops, being slaveholders!"—*Dr. Wm. Winans, of Miss. Conference. Debates in Gen. Conf. at Cincinnati, Ohio, (1836,) as reported by Jas. G. Birney.*

10th. "I am not an advocate for slavery, and with my present views, I never will be, while I draw the breath of life. But, this I confess, that *I am an advocate for those genuine Gospel doctrines, in which the principle of slavery is JUSTIFIED in a variety of instances!!!*

"Another error, into which the anti-slaveholders have fallen, is, the confounding slavery as it exists in the Church, with slavery as it exists in the State; whereas, there is a wide difference between them. *What may be moral evil in the State, may not be moral evil in the Church,* because they are placed in different circumstances.

"The Scriptures already quoted, and a variety of others that might be quoted, all combine to prove that the PRINCIPLE of *slavery* has been recognized by the appointment of God under the Old Testament dispensation. But another argument of considerable strength, to show that *God himself has SANCTIONED THE PRINCIPLE of slavery*, may be found in the moral law itself. In the tenth commandment it is expressly declared, that the Israelites were possessed of servants, and their right to hold such property was recognized even by the moral law itself, which is acknowledged by all Christians to be of perpetual obligation, even down to the end of the world."—*Samuel Dunwoody, So. Carolina Conference. Extracts from a Sermon, "published by request of the Conference," 1836.*

11th. "The first argument is, that slavery is wrong in the abstract. It is neither right, nor is it wrong, abstracted from its circumstances. Murder in the abstract, is neither right nor wrong. If the overt act of life-taking be done according to the established laws of the country, or in self-defence, it is taking life on a correct principle. If done contrary to law, and with malice afore-thought, it is murder, and therefore wrong. And so with slavery. It is right or wrong, and to be justified or condemned, according to its circumstances. A second argument is, that what is wrong in the beginning, can never become right by continuance. This is false in principle and practice; for if there be no prescription in politics, by which things once wrong become right, then all the claims and possessions of the present generation are wrong, and to this day, founded in oppression and injustice. Slavery may have had its origin in wrong, cruelty, oppression and robbery; yet, if the re-

dress of that wrong would be a greater evil than the wrong itself, then is it to be assumed as right !"—*Dr. Wm. A. Smith, of Virginia Conference. See abate on Harding's case, in the General Conference of 1844,—reported in the Adv. & Journal, N. York.*

12th. "I intend to come out on the subject of slavery with some facts, coming under my own immediate observation, showing the folly and wickedness of Abolitionism. In one neighborhood in Maryland, some years ago, the Methodists took it into their heads to free all their slaves. They did so. And what was the consequence ? Why, the curse of Almighty God has rested on them ever since ! They don't prosper, and they never will!"—*Jas. B. Ayres, Philadelphia Conference.*

The reader is respectfully introduced to the venerable "twelve," above named. Whether their teachings are as apostolic, as their number and professed character, all are capable of judging. The last quotation is from a conversation with the author, in the village of Coatsville, Pennsylvania, in 1837.

It is not difficult to perceive, what must be the influence of sentiments such as these are, entertained and expressed by such men, in the Methodist Church. These quotations show that the countenance given to slavery, was as earnest and efficient at the North, as at the South. Nor was it in theory only. As illustrative of some cases of slaveholding practised at the North, by Methodist clergymen, take the following instance. It is a most thrilling story, and needs no voucher, other than the reference made to well-known facts.

Rev. Haskell Wheelock, Wesleyan minister, when introducing the narrator to the author's notice, says ; " We are indebted to Elder Mathew of the Baptist denomination. He has, with unwearied diligence, labored to bring this dark and wicked transaction to light."

Rochester, March 28, 1848.

ELDER L. C MATLACK, Nashville, N. H.

*Dear Brother :—*In compliance with a request from Bro. Whee-lock, I give you the facts relating to the agency of Mr. J. M., in sending two free young women, from our territory, into chattel servitude. My attention was first called to the subject, by reading in the " Genius of Liberty," a communication, stating that Mr. J.

M. held two slaves. The communication was written by Dr. Dyer, of Burlington, Racine county, W. T., to Dr. Bailey, (now of Washington,) then of Cincinnati. It was published in the "Philanthropist," and copied into the "Genius of Liberty." Mr. M. was then (about 1841) chaplain to the Legislature, in Madison, our seat of government for the Territory.

I proposed to our Methodist friends, to inquire about the matter; they did so, and Mr. M. stated in reply, that the slaves belonged to his wife. The penalty for holding a slave in our Territory is one thousand dollars, and the same penalty is incurred by sending colored persons from our territory into slavery. And if the colored person consents to go, the law presumes that such consent was *fraudulently obtained*, and holds the person so sending, responsible to prove that the consent was honestly obtained.

In December, 1841, I visited Plattville, where Mr. M. resided, and made him a call, stating in the course of our conversation, that I had seen an article in print, which averred that he held slaves. He eyed me searchingly, and said, "I do not hold slaves, but my wife holds two; they were given to her, and the title-deed was made out in her name."

Addressing Mrs. M., I observed, "It is a thousand dollars' penalty, madam, for any one to hold slaves in our Territory."

"Yes," said Mr. M., "my wife knows the law."

After some further conversation the interview closed.

I wrote to the editor of the "Genius of Liberty" an account of the above visit, and the conversation that was held, and the editor, (Mr. Eastman, now editor of the Western Citizen,) published it. Some months after, I went to the West again, and visited Galena, at which place the colored people came to me, and stated that Mr. M. had run off Alice, one of his slaves, to St. Louis, and begged me to endeavor to procure her liberation from slavery.

I immediately visited Plattville, the constable of which place, Mr. Anthony Laughlin, was circulating a subscription paper for the purpose of sending down a lawyer to St. Louis, to restore the slave to freedom. A lawyer, Mr. ——, had agreed to go, if fifty dollars in cash could be raised; but the amount could not be raised. Some colored men offered to subscribe a week's work, and I think one was willing to subscribe a fortnight's work, but as this was not cash, the effort failed.

Mr. Aiken, deacon of the Presbyterian Church in the same village, went to Galena, and had an interview with the clerk of the steamboat which took away the unfortunate Alice. The clerk stated that Mr. M. had brought down the slave, had committed her to the charge of the captain, and had given directions to have her

left at St. Louis; which directions had been complied with. I had these facts from Mr. Aiken's lips. A great deal of fog was thrown around the matter by Mr. M., and we scarcely knew what steps to take.

In 1842 the Territorial Anti-Slavery Society was organized at Delavan, Walworth county, in our Territory, and Mr. Root, a Presbyterian minister, rose and stated that a slave had been sent to the South from Wisconsin, by a Methodist minister. As his name was called for, I gave it. But some thought that without more evidence it would be injudicious to proceed. So the matter was dropped.

In 1843, Mr. M. had been removed from Plattville, where he was a local preacher, to the eastern part of Wisconsin, and was engaged in supplying Racine and Southport M. E. stations. In the summer of the above year, the semi-annual meeting of the Territorial Anti-Slavery Society was held at Racine, and the following preamble and resolution were passed :

"Whereas Rev. J—— M—— has sent a colored woman into a slave State—*Resolved*, That he is bound to inform the public whether he sent her off as free or as a slave; and if free, whether he gave to her her free papers."

A committee was also appointed to see Mr. M. and inquire into the matter.

Two effects followed this action ; one was, the writer was branded by some members of the Conference as a slanderer ; the other was, a communication was sent to Mr. Eastman, signed "Anti-Abolition," stating that it was illegal to hold slaves in Wisconsin, and hence the statement of Mr. M. having held slaves, must be a falsehood.

I forwarded to Mr. Eastman a list of those who reported themselves in the census of 1840 as slaveholders, showing that slaves were held, though in defiance of law, yet approved of by public sentiment. This was published in the Western Citizen. One of the members of the Conference warned me to be careful of what I said in charging these things on Bro. M. I told him I would risk it.

In 1844, the Territorial Anti-Slavery Society held its annual meeting in Milwaukee, to which place Mr. M. had by this time been removed. He was preaching to the church there, and in company with the rest of the ministers, attended the anti-slavery meeting. Having been to the West, I procured certificates from the neighbors of Mr. M., showing what they knew in relation to the case. I handed them to Mr. Gaston, Secretary of the Society, and member of the committee to examine into the matter—(the

Executive Committee constituting the committee to investigate it.) Mr. Gaston said they had done nothing, and could make no report on the subject. I conversed with Bro. Foote, a Presbyterian minister from Racine. "Oh," said he, "let all that old stuff go. Mr. M. is with us now."

The Secretary read his report in the order of business, and the writer, on motion to accept, rose and inquired, "Shall we hear from the committee on a subject which it was appointed to investigate, viz., the case of a young woman sent to the South by a minister. I have no wish to bring it up now; but shall we hear from the committee?" In reply it was stated that that matter-would come up by and by. So the report was accepted and adopted.

In the afternoon, I proposed that we should hear from the committee on the subject of the young woman enslaved by a minister. To which it was replied, (I believe by Mr. Reet,) "The committee have been discharged; it is now too late."

I then moved the appointment of another committee on the same subject. This was violently opposed; it was denounced as inquisitorial; and a motion was made to expunge from the records the resolution calling on Mr. M. for explanation.

Mr. Codding opposed the last motion, and it was lost. The motion I made was put and carried in the affirmative. I handed the certificates to a member of the committee, and he stated that they had seen Mr. M., who had promised to explain the whole matter. The sun was near setting on the second day, and Mr. M. had given no explanation. Knowing that there would be a press of business in the evening, and a favorable opportunity presenting itself, I proposed that we should hear from Mr. M. This brought upon me a strain of denunciation from Mr. Finch, a lawyer of Milwaukie. He stated that Mr. M. did not wish to say any thing about it. This produced some discussion, and more excitement, till finally Mr. M. had to rise and explain.

After complimenting the society on their candor, piety and talent, and expressing the hope that justice could be done to him in an abolition convention—a thing he had never expected—he proceeded to state that he had given up property worth from 10,000 to 15,000 dollars, because he would not hold property in slaves; that on leaving the South, two slaves had been given to his wife, with a proviso in the deed, that if ever she parted from them, she should send them back to her father, who gave them. "I brought them," continued Mr. M., "with me to Wisconsin; and after living some years here, as they desired to go to the South, I took one of them in my buggy, carried her to Galena, and paid her fare to St. Louis. And I afterwards sent off the other; and I would do so again, to

the tenth time. I could wish that there were no sectarianism in bringing this up."

Seeing that Mr. M. had blinded the Convention, so that the real issue was not seen, I rose to reply, when his friends cried out, "Question! question! question!" "I should like to make some remarks, gentlemen," said I; but interrupting me, they called, "Question! question!" So I took my seat, remarking, "Well, I do not call that justice." "No," said another; "nor I." "Nor I," said another. I also promised the Lord, mentally, to preach on that case in every pulpit I entered, and talk on it in every house I visited.

Late at night a resolution was introduced by Mr. Bean, the Methodist steward, as follows:—

"*Resolved*, That calling on Mr. M—— to explain about those slaves, was ungentlemanly, unkind, unchristian and unjust."

Mr. Codding opposed this, and it was withdrawn. And another was introduced, exonerating Mr. M. from all intentional wrong in the transaction. This was put by the chair; about twenty voted for it, and about fifteen against it; but the body of the Convention did not vote. Soon after this, a letter written by Mr. Cross, Wesleyan Methodist minister in Illinois, was forwarded to Milwaukie, in which the substance of the deed of gift was stated, from which it appeared that, if Mrs. M. should die without children, then Mr. M. was to own the slaves; and the deed was signed by Mr. M.'s hand!

Soon after it was reported that Mrs. M. had drawn up a deed of emancipation for the slaves. This she stated to some ladies in Milwaukie, and to Mr. Fowler, who drove her in a carriage from the lawyer's office, (Mr. Finch's,) to the post office where the document was mailed.

I called on Mr. Finch, and he told me in reply to my inquiries, that he had drawn up a *power of attorney*, in compliance with Mrs. M.'s request, to be forwarded to St. Louis. At that time Mr. M. was in New York.

Time rolled on, and Mr. M. was appointed Presiding Elder of the Milwaukie District. As the slaves did not return, we continued to agitate the matter by voice and pen. In reply to some queries put to Mr. M. by the Methodists, he stated that one of the slaves had been taken sick in St. Louis, and the wages of the well one were absorbed in paying the expenses of the sick one, except eighteen dollars, and that amount was sent to Mrs. M., and she had received it.

We were now satisfied that the slaves had been hired out. In a number of places Mr. M. had to give an explanation of the affair

before commencing his quarterly meeting, as the thing by this time was noised abroad very considerably.

In 1845, at the annual meeting of the Liberty Association in Waukesha, (then Prairieville,) a committee was appointed on the case of a person kidnapped from our Territory. Mr. Finch tried hard to prevent the writer from being appointed on the committee, but failed, and quitted the meeting after the first day's exercises.

The committee brought in their report, which proved, that by Mr. M.'s own statement, he was a kidnapper; that he was the responsible person, and recommended the passage of four resolutions:—

1st. To rescind the one passed in Milwaukee, clearing Mr. M. from blame. (This was carried unanimously.)

2d. That according to the ordinance of '87, no person treading the soil of Wisconsin could be a slave, and whosoever should send persons from the Territory into chattel servitude, was guilty of kidnapping and man-stealing, and violated the laws of God and our Territory.

3d. That a committee be appointed to present the matter to Conference.

4th. That a committee be appointed to take legal steps to secure the freedom of the young women.

At this meeting six Methodist ministers spoke in defence of Mr. M. Of these, Mr. Peck thought our efforts were injuring the anti-slavery cause. Mr. Deming thought Mr. M. must have known that he was doing wrong; he was too smart a man not to know it; but the whole subject had better, however, be laid on the table.

Mr. Clark stated that one of the slaves had been converted since she had gone South!

Mr. Holton said, "He who steals my purse steals trash, but he who filches from me my good name, takes that which not enriches him, but makes me poor indeed."

Mr. Barber wished to know of any lawyer present, whether a woman could legally make out a writing such as it was claimed that Mrs. M. had made out.

Mr. Tichenor, a lawyer, stated that without the signature of the husband, it was of no legal validity.

Mr. Jillson showed that bringing the young women to the Territory emancipated them.

Mr. Caulkins showed that if they were willing to go into bondage, then slavery had exerted its most damning influence upon them.

Finally, the second resolution was carried, and the other two, with the Report, were re-committed, and the committee enlarged.

1846. In the annual meeting of this year the Liberty Association adopted an address to the annual Rock River Conference, of which I will endeavor to procure a copy for you. The secretary was ordered to forward it to the Conference.

Soon after, Mr. Deming of Southport was tried before the church, for saying that Mr. M. was a slaveholder. He admitted that he had said so, but denied that it was slander, for he could prove the truth of the statement. He presented such a mass of evidence to the court, that he was acquitted. The trial, with a good share of the evidence, was published in the "Southport American," "The American Freeman," the "Western Citizen," and abstracts of it in the "Western Christian," and numerous other papers.

The case was laid before the Grand Jury in Grant county, but as the foreman was a slaveholder, and most of the others were pro-slavery, nothing was done. The evidence, however, presented to the jury, was published in the "American Freeman," in reply to a request from the Washington Patriot, Pennsylvania, that the evidence be furnished, as a minister there denied the truth of the charge, and promised to enforce discipline, if proof should be adduced.

The "address" was duly forwarded to the conference in Galena in 1846, but arrived there just as the session was closed. Bishop Hamlin sent word to the secretary, that if it had come on in time, it would have been presented.

In 1847, a committee was appointed to forward the address to Conference, and with it documents duly certified, showing the agency of Mr. M. in the transaction. The documents and address were presented to the conference by the agency of Bishop Waugh, referred to a committee, and the committee reported that Mr. M. was not prepared to go into a trial of the matter,—and they recommended that a committee be appointed by the conference to try the case at some future period. The committee was appointed, as recommended. A motion was made to silence Mr. M. for a given period. It was lost. His brother, Mr. J. T. M., moved that he be superannuated, and he was superannuated.

Some few days since the trial commenced. After progressing some days, Mr. M. wished that it might be put off for a time, and it was so put off.

Yours for the slave,

EDWARD MATHEWS.

The following is a copy of the document presented to the Rock River Conference, in 1847,—and with it concludes a narrative in many respects peculiar. But its general aspect is similar to others

known to the author. While residing within the bounds of the Philadelphia Conference, I knew of several travelling ministers who owned slaves, whom they hired out at the South. And not a few who had married wives in Delaware and Maryland, I was informed, would hold one or more slaves in Pennsylvania, a little less than nine months, then return them to the South, and get others in their place, for a similar period, from their fathers-in-law. Thus evading the law of Pennsylvania that freed a slave after nine months' residence.

To the Presiding Bishop and Ministers composing the Rock River Conference of the M. E. Church.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:—We approach you in a Christian spirit, and feel justified in anticipating a reception marked by the regard which we entertain for you.

Were you not avowedly enlisted like us in the elevation of the morals of the community, and like us, self-devoted to the redemption of the human heart from the darkness of sin, and the human mind from that of ignorance; we would approach you as opponents, but, as it is, we exhort you as friends and brethren.

With deep regret we discovered by the proceedings of your last session that you have exonerated Rev. J—— M—— from guilt in his agency in the re-enslavement of the females whom he brought some years since from Southern slavery. The circumstances are so well known as to render recapitulation unnecessary. We need only refer to the fact, that as soon as those two females entered our Territory, the contingent interests which different parties claimed in them fell to the ground. The chains of chattelhood dropped from their limbs, they stood up "free," and their rights were as much the object of the protection of the law as those of the highest officer in Wisconsin.

Being unable to perceive how you can draw a different inference from these facts, we feel that we only discharge a solemn and imperious duty, in entreating you in the name of humanity, of our country, of our religion and of our laws, to reconsider the action you have had on the question.

It is true, that no action of yours or ours, may be successful in recovering these representatives of God's poor from the awful fate to which they have been consigned; but humanity, grievously wounded by their exile from freedom, happiness and security, imploringly demands some tribute of compassion. The high character of our Territory, as a land whose inhabitants are secure, is im-

paired ; and for *its* sake, we remonstrate against any act that does violence to the sacred rights of her people, with moral impunity.

Deep and lasting reproach has been cast on the name of Christianity, by an act involving in its consequences the physical and moral wretchedness, and probably in addition the spiritual death of the innocent and defenceless ; and we implore you not to throw the sanctifying mantle of our holy religion over an act of this character. The best of our laws, designed to paralyze the hand of tyranny, and secure to the weak as well as the strong the enjoyment of rational liberty, has been flagrantly violated ; and we invoke you, by all that is valuable in social order, not to give the example, already fearful from the high standing of the actor, the still more fearful character that it would derive from your deliberate and solemn sanction.

By your regard for the female character, we beseech you to withdraw your approval of the ungenerous excuse of Mr. M., that " his wife was the holder of the freed women," and the principal actor in the tragedy. She could not, even if willing, occupy that place ; and if she would not, it is in strange keeping with his high professions, to compel her to bear the odium of a woman who was regardless of woman's rights and woman's innocence.

And we feel assured, that after prayerful deliberation, you will hesitate much in sanctioning the trifling palliative, that these poor daughters of affliction were returned to the execrable brothel house of the South, in compliance with an agreement made with the father-in-law of Mr. M.

Awful thoughts are raised by the anxious apprehension, that on leaving the protection of our Territorial laws, they went fast as time down to the gates of death ; and it may be that even now the Lord of Sabbaoth hears the cry from their grieved spirits and broken hearts—" No man careth for my soul."

Signed, CHARLES DUNKER, *Pres. Wes. L. Ass'n.*

JOHN B. JILLSON, }
R. H. DEMING, } *Secretaries.*

CHAPTER VI.

ANTI-SLAVERY MOVEMENTS—EFFORTS OF O. SCOTT—OPPOSITION OF DR. FISK—DR. BANGS VERSUS GEO. STORRS—CIVIL SUIT AGAINST MR. STORRS—HIS TRIUMPH.

THE anti-slavery movement in this country, which is distinguished as "Modern Abolitionism," commenced a short period before the first efforts were made in the Methodist Church, which claim our special attention. But the principles avowed were precisely the same. Called together by the voice of bleeding humanity, a company of benevolent hearts met in Convention at Philadelphia, Pa., Dec. 4, 1833. Disdaining concealment of their views or designs, they prepared and set forth an able declaration of sentiments, and it was signed by all the members of the Convention, which was made up of persons from ten of the Free States. Sixty names are found attached to it. This became the test of anti-slavery character, among those who professed opposition to slavery. Few embraced these sentiments at once, but among the earliest were found some ministers and members of the Methodist E. Church.* Of those who became distinguished by their early devotion and untiring zeal in the anti-slavery cause, among the Methodists, it will become necessary to name, with some particularity, several members of the Eastern Conferences. In less than one year from the formation of the American Anti-Slavery Society, whose declaration of senti-

* In Zion's Watchman of Jan. 30, 1841, it is stated that "the first Methodist Anti-Slavery Society was formed in Oct., 1834, at the house of N. Dunn, 73 Leonard street, in this city. La Roy Sunderland presided at this meeting. And perhaps some will be surprised to know, that Bishop Hedding was appointed the first president of that society. Of course the Bishop declined; but he had the first honors of that office! The society next appointed Rev. George Pickering, and he declined also; but we have been told that he did not make up his mind to do so, till he had first received some advice upon the subject from 'head-quarters,' in New York."

"The next society in the Church was formed in June, 1835, by the members of the New England Conference; and another society was, we believe, formed by the members of the New Hampshire Conference, about the same time."

ments has been noticed here, a number of ministers, members of the New England and New Hampshire Conferences, issued an "Appeal," which had been written by La Roy Sunderland, on the subject of Slavery, and addressed to their brethren of the two conferences named.

The starting point in the Appeal is this—"No man has or can have a right to hold a fellow man, for one moment, in bondage as PROPERTY." The succeeding propositions, which were ably sustained, are here quoted as distinct paragraphs.

"The Bible condemns this kind of slavery, in precisely the same way that it condemns many other things which are allowed by all other Christians to be sin against God."

"The palpable inconsistency in a Christian's attempting to justify slavery from the word of God."

"The Discipline of the Church is opposed to slavery."

"The Church now is less opposed to slavery than fifty years ago."

"Slavery will never cease from the Church, if the rules against it are altered as they have been in the past."

"Wesley defined slaveholding to be a sin against God,"—"used as severe language against it as any modern abolitionist,"—"believed all slaveholders guilty,"—"did all that he could against it."

"All slaveholders do the same to perpetuate the sin of slavery, which temperate rum drinkers do to perpetuate drunkenness."

"Wesleyan ministers in England condemned the sin of slaveholding, encouraged their churches to act against it, and were sustained by the people."

"Solemn duties devolve on us in relation to slavery in this country."

The importance attached to this document, by those who were opposed to the sentiments and principles it advocated, may be known from the manner in which it was received and treated. Fearing the influence it would exert upon the Methodist community, in favor of "modern abolitionism," a "Counter Appeal" was put forth in opposition, written by Prof. Whedon, and signed by Dr. Fisk, President of the Wesleyan University, and others, members of the same conferences.

This was a well written, though fallacious production. It was not allowed to remain unnoticed by the first appellants. It was taken up by the author of the "Appeal," subjected to a critical investigation, and replied to with great ability.

This period marks the commencement of the anti-slavery struggle in the M. E. Church, which resulted, eight years later, in an anti-slavery secession from, and, two years later, a consequent pro-slavery division of the Church. And it is a coincidence somewhat remarkable, that the purpose of La Roy Sunderland to write his famous Appeal, was anticipated by the design of another distinguished minister, to publish a series of articles on Slavery in Zion's Herald, neither of them being privy to the purpose of the other.

In an article published in the True Wesleyan, June 3, 1848, it is said—"In November, 1834, Mr. Sunderland told" certain ministers that "he contemplated writing an Appeal." And it is said also that "the Appeal was published in December, 1834."

In the autobiography of the late Rev. O. Scott, (page 34 of his Life,) his language is, "I had made up my mind as early as October, 1834, to commence on my individual responsibility, the 1st of January ensuing, a series of articles on these subjects (Slavery and Abolitionism) in the Herald. Early in November I wrote my first article." So spontaneous are the feelings which prompt good men to engage simultaneously in a great and good work.

In order to success in the advocacy of an important reformatory movement, it is indispensably necessary that able advocates be employed—facilities for prompt and extensive communication with the public be gained—and a candid hearing by a discerning community be given. With these advantages, success is certain—with-out them, advancement will be slow and precarious. The circumstances associated with the early promulgation of anti-slavery sentiments in New England, combined these favorable incidents. The ability of the advocates was unrivalled. The columns of Zion's Herald, a weekly paper issued in Boston, under the patronage of the New England Conferences, were speedily opened, and the intelligent candor of the people of New England yielded to the influence thus exerted upon it.

Among the earliest of those who stood forth boldly and fearlessly in the defence of outraged humanity, when popular odium was inseparable from the position of an Abolitionist, was found ORANGE SCOTT *. He was a leading member of the New England Conference, and at the time Presiding Elder of Providence District. The position he ever maintained, in the anti-slavery struggle, makes it impossible to avoid an extended notice of his movements. The occasion of his *début* at a public meeting in Boston, is well remembered by many to this day, with feelings of pleasure and admiration. It is thus related to the author by John G. Whittier:—“ We had listened with intense interest to the thrilling eloquence of George Thompson ; and Henry B. Stanton had put forth one of his happiest efforts. A crowded assembly had been chained to their seats for hours. It was near ten o’clock in the evening. A pause ensued—the audience became unsettled, and many were moving toward the door, purposing to retire. A new speaker arose. He was a plain looking man, and seemed rather to hesitate in the few observations he first offered. An increasing disposition to listen evidently encouraged him, and he became animated and lively, eliciting demonstrations of applause. Spurred on by this, he continued with increasing interest, evident on the part of his hearers, who now resigned themselves willingly to his powerful appeals, responding at short intervals, in thunders of applause. To many, his illustrations were new and startling. I never can forget the masterly manner in which he met the objection, that abolitionists were blinded by prejudice, and working in the dark. ‘ Blind though we be,’ he remarked,—‘ aye, sir, though blind as Samson in the Temple of Dagon, like him, if we can do no more, we will grope our way along, feeling for the pillars of that temple which has been consecrated to the bloody rites of the Moloch Slavery ; and, grasping their base, we will bend forward, nerved by the omnipotence of Truth, and o’erturning the supports on which this system of abom-

* At the Conference for 1834, resolutions in favor of the Colonization scheme, offered by Dr. Fisk, were, on Mr. Scott’s motion, laid on the table,—and in 1834 he was actively engaged in promoting the anti-slavery cause on his district.

ination rests, upheave the entire fabric, whose undistinguishable ruins shall yet mark the spot where our grandest moral victory was proudly won.' The climax was complete. The applause was unbounded, as the speaker retired. Upon inquiry, we heard the name of O. Scott, now so well known among the ablest advocates of the slave's cause."

Wielding the pen of a ready writer, Orange Scott soon made tributary to the cause of the slave, the columns of Zion's Herald. Having been known for years as a frequent correspondent of that paper, his productions attracted attention extensively, and were instrumental of great good. About the same time at which the Appeal was issued, he commenced and continued for several months, with the aid of others equally devoted to the cause, an extensive and able correspondence on slavery. Dr. Fisk, whose influence and popularity was unrivalled, and who was distinguished as a good and great man in the opinions of the people, appeared as an antagonist. He was aided by Prof. Whedon, whom the Doctor declared "amply able to no justice to the subject." The discussion was spirited, and to some extent severely personal. The Doctor charged Mr. Scott with unbecoming zeal in the distribution of abolition periodicals, in language like this: "Even a Presiding Elder can peddle out these 'raw head and bloody bones' books all around his district; and at his own expense, I am told, send out weekly one hundred copies of the most exciting and unreasonable periodical published by the abolitionists of the day, to stir up among as many ministers, the same exclusive, censorious and fervid spirit. * * * In the same paragraph, he defined his own position thus:—"I hereby announce that I am opposed to the general movements of modern abolitionism, to many of its doctrines, and to much of its spirit; but at the same time, I claim for myself as much sympathy for the slave, and as deep a conviction of the evils of slavery, as abolitionists themselves." This qualification of his opposition, did not secure the result he desired. The discussion continued. The press teemed with the productions of the anti-slavery preachers in New England. Mr. Scott reviewed Dr. Fisk's communications in an able manner. He also prepared a series of communications on

Slavery, for the *Herald*, commencing Dec. 30, 1834, and embracing sixteen articles of interesting and well-timed reading matter. Thrilling facts were cited in abundance, showing the enormity of slavery, as a system of cruelty and murder. The pretensions of the American Colonization Society were examined and exposed to the condemnation of the community. And the duty, practicability, and superior advantages of immediate emancipation, were triumphantly presented in these articles.

The publication of these articles, and others of a similar character, with other influences, was productive of a general revolution in public sentiment among the Methodists; so that within six months a majority of the New England and New Hampshire Conferences were converted to the doctrines of immediate abolitionism. And in June, 1835, an anti-slavery delegation from both conferences, was secured to the General Conference, to be held in Cincinnati, May, 1836. This Conference will afford material for extended remark. The results of its action have already been cited, to some extent, in a former chapter. A detailed narrative of the proceedings relative to abolitionism, will be more in place now.

Before proceeding to that relation, it may be well to note some few incidents of considerable importance, showing the interest with which the contest was noted by other portions of the Church, as also the prejudice which influenced many minds high in authority.

When the election of delegates was made by the New England Conference, as before intimated, the anti-slavery question determined the choice. ORANGE SCOTT was honored with a large majority of the votes cast. Dr. Fisk, however, suffered a serious diminution of his popularity, and was far behind Mr. Scott, although his election was effected. Mr. Scott himself, so far from entertaining unkind feelings, voted for the Doctor. He declined the equivocal honor proffered him, by resigning his place, which was filled by another. This act called forth an address to the Doctor, congratulating him on his dignified declinature, which was signed by several distinguished clergymen and lay members, of New York

city, and was published to the world in the Christian Advocate and Journal. It condemned, in the strongest terms, the action of the New England Conference in choosing abolitionists for delegates.

The most remarkable feature in this correspondence was the singular fact, that it originated at Middletown, rather than New York! At least, such is the only opinion the author can entertain, after reading a letter, now before him, addressed to the late Rev. O. Scott, written by one who signed the address to Dr. Fisk. But as many of the actors in that unique affair have "gone hence," it is dismissed with a brief notice. It could not properly be passed over unnoticed.

The address and a reply from the doctor were extensively circulated by the Methodist papers throughout the country. They present a most remarkable feature of the controversy, and are, perhaps, unprecedented in the history of ecclesiastical affairs. Such an interference with the doings of an annual conference deserved, as it received, a prompt and stern rebuke from those who were thus unjustly assailed. A protest was prepared and published in Zion's Herald, signed by thirty-six members of the New England Conference. They requested its publication in the Christian Advocate and Journal. This was refused.

But the New England Conference was not alone the subject of misrepresentation and flagrant injustice. A complete view of the relative position of the question prior to the General Conference, cannot be given, without particular mention of the action of the New Hampshire Conference, and the conduct of the authorities of the Church toward it. This will give occasion to introduce to notice, first, the name of one of the most devoted advocates of the slave in New Hampshire,—that is, GEORGE STORRS. Distinguished as a devoted minister, and remarkable for his success in promoting the cause of religion, there was an influence associated with his name, that enabled him to accomplish much in promoting the cause of abolitionism. His influence among the Methodists in that region, was second to no man's. A narrative of his movements will present some singular facts, for consideration in time to come.

Impelled by zeal in the attempt to overthrow abolitionism by making abolitionists appear to the greatest possible disadvantage before the public, the editor of the Christian Advocate and Journal of 1835, No. 462 of that paper, thus speaks of George Storrs :—

"Look at the spirit manifested by the writer of the article on our fourth page, in his remarks upon the editors of this paper. And these are the musings of a man, a Christian brother, who, in his zeal for equalizing the black population of our country with the whites, applies the golden rule, 'Do as you would be done by.' What a metamorphosis is here ! The hitherto amiable Bro. Storrs changed into a bitter reviler ! Does he wish us to do by him, what he has done by us ? We dare not. We are forbidden to bring a 'railing accusation.' But we can hardly avoid saying, that if this be the effect of abolition principles, the sooner they are checked, the better for the Church, and the world, and certainly for the individuals themselves who are infected with them."

This induced the New Hampshire Conference, at its session in August of 1835, to appoint a committee to investigate his character. Their report is here given.

"The committee appointed on the case of Brother Storrs, beg leave to report, That the difficulty in relation to Brother Storrs, which has been submitted to their consideration, grows out of an editorial article which appeared in the 462d No. of the Christian Advocate and Journal, in which he is called 'a bitter reviler,' and indirectly, 'a railer.'

"The communications written by Brother Storrs, which are here referred to by the senior editor of the Christian Advocate and Journal, your committee have read and considered with careful attention. And though your committee do not apprehend that they are called upon, in the discharge of the duties assigned them, to express an opinion as to the merits of the controversy which has given rise to the article referred to, yet they do believe, that they cannot discharge their duty to Brother Storrs, without recommending for adoption by this Conference the following resolutions :

"*Resolved*, 1st. That in the opinion of this Conference, there is nothing in the remarks of Brother Storrs, referred to by the senior editor of the Christian Advocate and Journal, which can be justly construed into railing or 'bitter reviling.'

"*Resolved*, 2d. That if Brother Storrs *had been guilty* of 'railing' and 'bitter reviling,' whether publicly or not, his fault should not have been proclaimed through the columns of a newspaper,

until he had been regularly convicted of this crime, before the conference of which he is a member.

"Resolved, 3d. That if there was any thing *peculiarly objectionable* in the pieces written by Brother Storrs, to which the editor refers, then that circumstance *alone* should have kept them from the columns of that paper, especially as the editor had *refused* Brother Storrs the privilege of defending himself from the charges preferred against him in the columns of the Christian Advocate and Journal.

"Resolved, 4th. That a copy of the foregoing report be forwarded to the Christian Advocate and Journal, and Zion's Herald, for publication.

SCHUYLER CHAMBERLAIN,
SAMUEL NORRIS,
D. I. ROBINSON, } Committee.

Portsmouth, N. H., Aug. 6, 1835."

According to the usages of the Methodist Episcopal Church, this report should have been published in the Advocate and Journal, as the Conference requested of the editors; but instead of this, the editors of that paper refused to give it an insertion, and yet commented upon it at length, with great severity and injustice, inasmuch as the members of that Conference, as a body, were arraigned publicly, and condemned without the privilege of having their doings seen by the readers of the Advocate. A defence was prepared and published, by thirty-two members of the Conference. This also was refused a place in the Advocate.

It is but justice to remark, that this course was highly appreciated by the community generally. A remarkable coincidence of sentiment and action is discoverable; and it is worthy of note, that at the same period of time, when George Storrs was denounced as a railer and bitter reviler, and the abolitionists generally declared to be "jacobinical, hot-headed, furious and frenzied," at New York, he was arraigned, condemned, and sentenced to suffer the punishment of the laws as "a common railer and brawler," in Pittsfield, N. H.

The *finale* of this memorable development of pro-slavery wrath is given by the editor of the Herald of Freedom, who attended the Court of Common Pleas. He says—

"Our readers have not yet forgotten the infamous outrage on law and justice, and common sense, committed against Mr. Storrs, at Pittsfield, last March. It will be remembered that he was charged, on the oath of **SHERBURNE GREEN**, with being 'a common railer and brawler, and, on the miserable and ridiculous testimony of two men, who, out of *seventeen* witnesses summoned, were chosen as the most supple tools, and after a speech from **Moses Norris, Jr., Esq.**, a member of the bar, was convicted by **REUBEN T. LEAVITT**, of Pittsfield, assisted by **ROBERT KNOX**, of Epsom, and **HENRY ROBY**, of Chichester, public magistrates of New Hampshire, and sentenced to 'be committed to the House of Correction,' and 'put to hard labor for the term of three months'!"

"The case came up last Monday afternoon, by appeal, before the Court of Common Pleas, now sitting in Concord. His honor Judge Richardson called for the prosecuting party, but no one responded. He called again. He inquired of the Attorney General—he knew nothing of the matter. A member of the bar referred the Judge to Moses Norris—who was present. He shook his head, while every eye in the room was bent on him with piercing glances. Another member remarked that 'he had repented.' No one appearing to conduct the prosecution, the Judge ordered it to be discharged."

Poisoned as was the public mind, it would not bear out such a stretch of intolerant opposition to a worthy minister. But this chapter will now be concluded. The next will continue the incidents relative to the progress of abolitionism prior to the General Conference of 1836.

CHAPTER VII.

ZION'S WATCHMAN PUBLISHED—BLACKFORD'S CASE—EXCLUSION OF ABOLITIONISTS FROM CERTAIN PULPITS IN NEW YORK CITY—O. SCOTT PROSCRIBED BY A MISSIONARY COMMITTEE.

THE growing interest manifested in, and the great importance really associated with the principles of the abolitionists, induced the friends of the cause in the Methodist Church to commence the publication of a weekly paper, whose columns should be devoted mainly

to the discussion of slavery. Zion's Watchman, as it was called, was published in New York city, by "The New York Wesleyan Society." The first number was issued January 1, 1836, with La Roy Sunderland as Editor. He was a member of the New England Conference, but was then on the superannuated list on account of ill health. In the first number he sets forth in the following language his position toward the Church :

" In the outset, it is proper for us to declare, perhaps, in order to prevent any misapprehension of our object, that, in publishing this paper, it is by no means designed to come in contact with any one distinctive feature or principle of Methodism. It is rather our object to defend the discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church against the *sin of holding and treating the human species as property*. We purpose to show that *Christianity* always did, and always will *condemn* the practice,—that it was condemned by Wesley and his coadjutors in the ministry, and especially by those who organized the Methodist Episcopal Church :—And further, we shall show that *many* of our preachers of the present day hold precisely the same views, and advocate the same measures, with regard to this 'great evil,' which were held and advocated by the venerable Wesley, and those holy men who organized the Methodist Church, and consequently, that in admitting and continuing this 'great evil' in this Church, we have sadly departed from the 'ancient landmarks' which were set up by the founder of the Methodist societies, and his immediate successors in the gospel ministry."

This movement was far from agreeable to the editor of the official paper at New York. He noticed the first number of the Watchman with brief but severe strictures. This prompted the editor of the Watchman to present a statement which it is proper to copy in part, as the editor was afterwards much misrepresented, opposed and persecuted. This statement will evidence the spirit of his foes, and show why he ventured to assume the unenviable position of editor of a paper so much abused in after years.

" It is now nothing new to our readers, when we say that, for nearly two years, a large proportion of our ministers and members in the New England States have been very much afflicted at the course which the Christian Advocate and Journal has been pursuing with regard to them, and the subject of slavery. This dissatisfaction was not occasioned by any difference of opinion merely,

upon this subject, between them and the worthy editors of that paper, nor did it arise from what was said in the Advocate, justly in defense of the American Colonization Society.

" It has arisen solely from the proscriptive course which that paper has taken towards those in the Northern and Middle States, who have felt it their duty to bear their testimony against the sin of slavery. No dissatisfaction has ever been felt, that we know of, because the Christian Advocate and Journal did not take a prominent stand *against* slavery—this was never either desired or expected. The ground of complaint has been, that our official paper has defended one side of a question, upon which our Church and the nation generally are divided in opinion, and that it has repeatedly published communications and editorial articles upon *one* side of this question, to the utter exclusion of the other. In opposing the views of those from whom it differed, this paper has censured individuals by *name*, and refused to give them the opportunity of either explaining, where they conceived themselves misunderstood, or defending themselves against the injury which they believed its *ex parte* statements were calculated to do them. Two of our annual conferences, also, have been misrepresented in the Christian Advocate and Journal, and held up to public censure, while they, or a large number of their members, have been refused the privilege of giving any explanation or defence, in reply to the numerous and heavy charges which have been published abroad against them. * * * * *

" The Christian Advocate and Journal has, from time to time, during two years past, indiscriminately applied to the abolitionists uncourteous and unchristian names. It has given an incorrect and mischievous view of their sentiments upon the subject of slavery, by denouncing them in severe and censorious language, and at the same time, it has refused them the privilege of explaining their views when they believed they were misunderstood, or of defending themselves against the unjust charges which they believed that paper had published against them.

" PROOF.—In the 407th No. of the Advocate, we have the following set off:—' I hope in God, that the *injudicious measures, the anti-republican doctrines, and the jacobinical speculations of those hot-headed abolitionists,* will not lead to insurrections among the unfortunate people whose case they profess to commiserate.'—Is there no heavy censure in all this? And one would suppose, that charges as heavy as the above, could never have been made in any professedly religious paper, without giving to the accused, at the same time, the privilege of showing them false, if this could be done. Or is it a trifling thing, to proclaim a large and respect-

able portion of our fellow Christians, among whom are numbered ministers of the gospel, physicians, lawyers, statesmen, professors and presidents of colleges, is it a light thing to proclaim such, through the columns of a *Christian* paper, as a set of 'injudicious, anti-republican, jacobinical, hot-headed speculators'?

"When the article which contained this language first appeared in the *Christian Advocate* and *Journal*, I was in this city, and immediately embraced an opportunity of conversing with the 'member of the New York Conference,' (Dr. Bangs,) who wrote the said article, with regard to it. This was the first of June, 1834. I informed Bro. Bangs that a respectable number of the Conference to which I belonged, were known by the name of abolitionists,—that they would, and some of them I knew, *did* feel themselves injured by it. I further requested him to give me the privilege of replying to it, but he declined. In the mean time, one or more persons wrote to the *Advocate* against the above language, as will be seen in another proof of the statement now under consideration; and I know further, that one communication was sent from Hartford, Conn., against it, as it was afterwards published in one of the Boston papers, with a statement from the writer, that it had been rejected by the *Christian Advocate* and *Journal*.

"In the 411th No. the abolitionists are indiscriminately denounced again, as '*vaporing zealots of a speculative and false philanthropy*'—'*not convertable*'—and '*who would not, could not be trusted by any body, pious or profane, for any good thing, make what professions they might.*' This is the language of Dr. Capers; and he further declares, that some of those '*vaporing zealots*' at the North had preached such '*ranting, fanatical, incendiary*' sermons in favor of the American Colonization Society, 'that if I,' says he, '*could myself have been the author and distributor of them, and had been to suffer death for it, I might not have called the punishment a persecution.*'

"What more, indeed, could have been said by any one to provoke the popular indignation against any society in this nation, than may be found in the foregoing language."

The necessity of having a widely circulated periodical will be acknowledged by all who duly regard the extract here presented. The new paper was well sustained, and became the medium of much interesting and useful information on various topics, and a powerful auxiliary in the defence of outraged truth and bleeding humanity. Important facts were brought to light, through its columns, on the

subject of slavery, and an influence was exerted by it that will tell in all time to come on the destiny of slavery, until it is entirely overthrown. With this notice of Zion's Watchman, we will now proceed to record and consider various items of interest occurring to the session of the General Conference approached.

Among other expedients calculated to advance the cause of truth in the city of New York, four individuals published an edition of "Wesley's Thoughts on Slavery." One of them forfeited his standing in the M. E. Church for that act alone. The particulars are thus detailed by Zion's Watchman, May 1, 1836, and not contradicted.

"The facts in the premises, as far as we have been able to learn them from the preacher in charge of the West Circuit, where Mr. Blackford belonged, and from members of the Leaders' meeting, by which his case was decided, are as follows:

"1. In the spring of 1835, W. H. Blackford, then on probation in our church, had his name, (with three others, who were members,) attached to Wesley's *Thoughts on Slavery*, which he, with the three others named, published in the form of a tract, addressed 'To the Members of the Methodist E. Church throughout the United States.'

"2. On the last page of this tract is given Wesley's letter to Wilberforce on the subject of Slavery, to which this note is added, viz:—

"This letter is supposed to have been addressed to Mr. Wilberforce, and, as its date shows, was written by Mr. Wesley only four days before his death."—*Ed. (of the Methodist Book Room.)*

"This note to that letter, it will have been observed by the reader, was added by the editor of Wesley's Works, as it is found in the edition published at the Methodist Book Room in London, and to make this fact appear to the reader of the above tract, the brethren before named added the words to the note in brackets, as they appear above. Had they not done this, the signature '*Ed.*' at the end of the note, would evidently be misunderstood as standing for themselves, as publishing those '*Thoughts*' in their present form.

"3. When W. H. Blackford was brought before the Leaders' Meeting of the West Circuit in this city, for admission into full connection, objections were made against him, on the ground that he had put his name to Wesley's *Thoughts on Slavery*, as a member of the Methodist E. Church, and not as a *probationer!* and also,

that the words added in brackets on the last page of the tract, explanatory as to what editor was meant, were calculated to *deceive* the public, inasmuch as the editors of the Methodist Book Concern in New York would be understood by it!

"Now we beg the reader's attention to the following facts:—

"1. The *only* objections made against admitting W. H. Blackford into full membership in the Methodist E. Church, were founded on his having his name to the tract mentioned above.

"2. When this case was before the Board of Leaders, he certified the preacher in charge, that he would alter the objectionable note above named, and have it stricken from the stereotype plates.

"3. He was refused admission into the church notwithstanding this offer; and after he was dropped, he asked the preacher in charge 'what he was dropped for?' and he was told that '*that* was a question which he had no right to ask.' Now we leave it to our readers to judge what the real cause was, for which his connection was dissolved with the M. E. Church. We should not have referred to the subject again, had it not been denied that the brother in question was dropped on account of his abolitionism, or the part he had taken in publishing or circulating Wesley's Thoughts on Slavery; whereas we are prepared to prove, beyond the possibility of successful contradiction, that this *was* the cause.

"We have now only to add, that if we have in the least degree misstated any fact, in connection with this affair, our columns are free for its correction."

Here we have the first instance of proscription for anti-slavery doings, by the authorities of the Church, which aimed at cutting the person off from Christian communion, or barring up the way to advancement in the Church. Many cases followed in the few years subsequent to this, which will be given in detail hereafter. The deliberate and systematic persecution of abolitionists was not commenced until after the General Conference. Then and there commenced what one of the delegates has well designated "*The Reign of Terror.*" Indications of what might be expected are not wanting. Instance the above. It is remarkable, moreover, that the trustees of this same "West Circuit," in less than one year afterward, shut out from all their pulpits, by a solemn vote, all ministers known as abolitionists. Zion's Watchman thus speaks of it:—

"Will our readers believe it! Will they not pronounce it a

dream, when we tell them that the board of trustees of the West Circuit in this city, on the evening of April 20, 1836, passed a resolution requesting the preacher in charge hereafter not to invite any preacher, known to be an abolitionist, to preach in either of our churches on that circuit !!

"The names of two members of that board, however, perhaps we ought to say, are recorded upon the same record against that resolution. It was passed against their consent and earnest entreaties."

As evidence that this proscriptive spirit was not confined to the circuit just named, it should be mentioned here, that a short time previous to this, there was a development of it by the Managers of the Missionary Society of the M. E. Church. The facts are these: At a meeting of the Board of Managers, or a committee thereof, where arrangements were about being made for the anniversary, among others, Orange Scott was proposed as one of the speakers. But he was objected to on the ground that he was an *abolitionist*, and that it would be best to have no speaker on that occasion who was committed on *either* side of the subject. Bro. Scott was proposed twice, we believe, but without effect.

Afterward, however, some of the brethren from the South were invited by the board, or by the committee of arrangements, to attend the missionary anniversary, and to speak on that occasion. If Bro. Scott could be considered an improper person to be employed as a speaker at the missionary meeting, because he was "committed on the subject of slavery," how came it to pass that two speakers were engaged from the South, who, if they were not slaveholders, were nevertheless committed, as really, if not as much, on the side of slavery?

Leaving the question to be answered by the reader, it may be well to suggest, that the presence of such antipathy to abolitionists in the city occupied as the great centre of the Connection, argues, by implication at least, the pro-slavery character of the principles adopted and sustained by the Church. These measures were adopted in reference to those who were on their way to the General Conference. Thither let us follow them. Incidents of thrilling interest will invite attention in the coming chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF 1836—WESLEYAN CONFERENCE ADDRESS—MEMORIALS ON SLAVERY—DISCUSSION ON ABOLITIONISM—O. SCOTT'S ADDRESS—HIS ADDRESS CHARGED WITH PALPABLE FALSEHOOD—EXCITING DISCUSSION.

It was evidently desired by many of the members of the General Conference from the North, to avoid the subject of slavery entirely, although no reluctance was manifested to speaking and acting against abolitionism. But anti-slavery memorials had been forwarded from various parts of the Connection, and the official address of the English Wesleyans alluded to it, so that discussion was unavoidable. This would offend the slaveholders in the Conference, and to conciliate them was deemed an important and necessary work. How this was accomplished, the facts to be related will show.

The General Conference of the M. E. Church for 1836, commenced its session in Cincinnati, Ohio, on Monday, May 2, at 9 o'clock, A. M. Bishops Roberts, Soule, Hedding and Andrew were present. As the doings of this body had so much to do with abolitionism in after years, it may be well to give the names of the delegates. It will enable us to know who the anti-abolitionists and slaveholders were, and also be an aid in reading the discussions, giving each speaker's locality.

N. Y. Conf.—D. Ostrander, N. Bangs, B. Waugh, P. P. Sanford, S. Martindale, M. Richardson, L. Clark, W. Jewett, J. B. Stratton, P. Rice.

N. E. Conf.—O. Scott, I. Bonney, P. Crandall, C. Virgin, J. A. Merrill, D. Fillmore, D. Webb.

Maine Conf.—H. Nickerson, E. Robinson, C. Baker, W. H. Norris, G. Webber, J. B. Husted, M. Hill.

N. H. Conf.—C. D. Cahoon, J. F. Adams, S. Kelley, S. Chamberlain, J. Perkins, E. J. Scott, E. Scott; G. Storrs, S. Norris.

Troy Conf.—B. Goodsell, C. Sherman, S. Minor, N. Leving, T. Spicer, J. D. Ferguson, P. C. Oakley.

Oneida Conf.—H. Agard, G. Gary, G. Lane, Geo. Peak, Z. Paddock, E. Bowen, S. Comfort.

Genessee Conf.—S. Luckey, L. Grant, G. Fillmore, J. Hemmingway, M. Tooker, W. Heng, A. Abel.

Pittsburg Conf.—C. Elliot, M. Ruter, T. M. Hudson, W. Browning, J. S. Barris, R. Hopkins, J. Munroe.

Ohio Conf.—T. A. Morris, J. Young, D. Young, W. H. Raper, L. R. Sworstedt, J. Feree, J. B. Finley, W. B. Christie, J. Quinn, J. F. Wright, A. Eddy, J. H. Power.

Missouri Conf.—G. C. Light, A. Munroe, T. Johnson, J. Green.

Kentucky Conf.—J. Stamper, B. T. Crouch, H. B. Bascom, E. Stevenson, H. H. Kavanaugh, G. W. Taylor.

Illinois Conf.—Peter Cartwright, H. Crews, Simon Peter.

Mississippi Conf.—Wm. Winans, John Lane, B. M. Drake.

Indiana Conf.—A. Wiley, J. L. Thompson, C. W. Ruter, Jas. Havens.

Holston Conf.—S. Patton, Wm. Patton, T. K. Catlett, D. Flemming.

Tennessee Conf.—R. Paine, J. M. Holland, G. T. Henderson, T. L. Douglas, G. W. D. Harris, G. B. M'Ferrin, A. L. P. Green.

Alabama Conf.—R. L. Kinnon, F. H. Jones, W. Wier, W. Murrah.

Georgia Conf.—S. K. Hodges, L. Pearce, J. Howard, E. Sinclair.

S. C. Conf.—W. Capers, S. Dunwoddy, W. M. Kennedy, N. Tally, C. Betts, M. McPherson.

Virginia Conf.—M. Brock, T. Crowder, H. G. Lehigh, L. Skidmore, J. McAdden, A. Penn, John Early, Wm. A. Smith.

Baltimore Conf.—S. G. Roszel, N. Wilson, A. Griffith, D. Steele, Wm. Hamilton, J. Davis, Wm. Prettyman, R. Cadden, J. A. Collins, J. Bear, S. Brison.

Philadelphia Conf.—Jos. Librand, R. W. Petherbridge, L. Scott, S. Higgins, C. Pitman, M. Force, M. Sorin, H. White, Jas. Smith, Jr., D. Dailey, Wm. A. Higgins.

On the first day of the session, Messrs. Wm. Lord and Wm. Case were introduced to the Conference. The former was a delegate from England, the latter from Canada, sent by the Wesleyan Methodists. Mr. Lord, in some remarks he offered, alluded to

slavery; and he did this, he said, because it was introduced by the Wesleyan Conference into their address, which he then presented to the General Conference. It was not read until the next day. The reading produced a great sensation.

On motion of Dr. Bangs, it was referred to a committee of three, with instructions to report as early as possible. They were, Dr. Bangs, Dr. Capers, and T. A. Morris. Orange Scott moved to have the address printed in the periodicals of the Church. Dr. Bangs opposed the printing of that portion of it which related to slavery. The motion to print was laid on the table.

The next day, May 4th, Dr. Bangs presented a report in answer to the address from the Wesleyan Conference. This report, after taking a view of the various afflictions the Church has experienced in the death of two bishops, the decrease of numbers the year past, and the destruction of the Book Concern by fire, and various other matters, comes by and by to that part of the address of the Wesleyan Conference which relates to slavery. Here, among other things, the report says, that had the Wesleyan Conference fully understood the difficulties of this subject in this country, and how slavery was interwoven in many of our State Constitutions, they would probably have censured us less, or modified their language on this subject. The report spoke of the "*trouble abolitionism*" has made, but nothing of the *trouble of slavery*.

Considerable discussion took place, when it was moved to adopt the report. T. Spicer, of the Troy Conference, rose and said—“The report speaks of the ‘trouble abolitionism’ has made us; I think *slavery* should be inserted instead of abolitionism.” This seemed to be a new thought to some; they seemed to have forgotten that slavery was any trouble at all.

O. Scott made a very few remarks, as did several others, and the report was finally ordered, on motion of John Early, of the Virginia Conference, to lay on the table for the present.

Most of the session was taken up next day in considering the report of the Committee in reply to the Wesleyan Conference. It was presented with the language somewhat altered. It was extremely difficult, however, to get the language, on the part relating

to slavery, so as to suit those that were *not* abolitionists—the discussion was almost entirely among those that were not abolitionists. Various alterations and amendments were proposed, and once a motion was made to strike out the *whole* that related to slavery. The report was finally adopted. During this discussion, the abolitionists received some hard slants, without making any reply. Abolitionism, for instance, was said to be an “unhallowed flame that has burned to the destruction of both whites and blacks.” “We are not insurrectionists,” said Dr. Capers, “we are under Caesar’s jurisdiction—we are not negro *haters*, but negro *lovers*; we give our lives for the negroes.” Said J. Early, from Va., “Let the Methodist members from Maine to Georgia, come out and denounce abolitionists.” He remarked that it was of little use for Southern Methodists to denounce them, for that is expected, and it is replied, the South are slaveholders: but let the Church altogether denounce them, and it will place the Methodist Church on an eminence that it never had before, while other churches are becoming divided by this excitement.

As adopted, the report was much modified in language, and did not censure abolitionism nor condemn slavery. It was immediately moved by O. Scott to call up the resolution to print the address of the Wesleyan Conference, but the hour of adjournment arrived, and it was deferred. The next day it was resumed by Dr. Bangs. The vote was 59 to 59, and Bishop Soule being in the chair, gave the casting vote against calling it up. So the document was not ordered printed.

Memorials on slavery were presented as follows:—Joseph A. Merrill presented one signed by 200 Methodist ministers and preachers, praying for the restoration of the original rule on slavery. Another on the same subject was presented by O. Scott, signed by 2284 members of the church, and by others from within the bounds of the Maine, New England, New Hampshire, New York, Oneida, Genesee and Troy Conferences. They were all referred to the committee on slavery, viz.: I. Davis, J. A. Merrill, J. F. Adams, W. A. Smith, L. Pearce, D. Daily, G. S. Holmes. Their report was brief, and of course, adverse to the petitioners, as

only two of the committee were abolitionists. It was opposed to any change in the Discipline, or other legislation on that subject now. On the appointment of a committee to prepare the pastoral address, it was moved by S. G. Roszel and S. Luckey, to instruct the committee to incorporate an article on "abolition." O. Scott moved to add, "and another on slavery." This led to the withdrawal of the former.

The next day, (May 12,) S. G. Roszel, of the Baltimore Conference, presented the following preamble and resolutions, which are now quoted from the Philanthropist, as reported by the editor, James G. Birney :—

"Whereas great excitement has pervaded this country on the subject of modern abolitionism, which is reported to have been increased in this city, recently, by the unjustifiable conduct of two members of the General Conference, in lecturing upon, and in favor of that agitating topic ;—and whereas, such a course on the part of any of its members is calculated to bring upon this body the suspicion and distrust of the community, and misrepresent its sentiments in regard to the point at issue ;—and whereas, in this aspect of the case, a due regard for its own character, as well as a just concern for the interests of the church confided to its care, demand a full, decided and unequivocal expression of the views of the General Conference in the premises—Therefore,

"1. *Resolved*, by the delegates of the annual conferences in General Conference assembled, that they disapprove in the most unqualified sense, the conduct of the two members of the General Conference, who are reported to have lectured in this city recently, upon and in favor of modern abolitionism.

"2. *Resolved*, by the delegates of the annual conferences in General Conference assembled—that they are decidedly opposed to modern abolitionism, and wholly disclaim any right, wish or intention, to interfere in the civil and political relation between master and slave, as it exists in the slaveholding States of this Union.

"The following statement will serve to explain the particular occasion which gave rise to the first resolution. A regular weekly meeting of the Cincinnati A. S. Society was held on the preceding Tuesday evening. At this, Mr. Storrs and Mr. Norris, of New England, members of the General Conference, and well known as abolitionists, were present. They each made some remarks which were very well received—and the result was the addition of fifteen members to the Society. Says Mr. Birney :

"The character of the resolutions, the circumstance which occasioned them, together with the stern gravity of Mr. Roszel, produced no little excitement. 'The blood of the Southrons was up,' as the phrase is. Many violent, denunciatory things were said by them, which, inasmuch as we have no notes, we shall not attempt to repeat. Some amendments were proposed. One moved by Mr. Wright, Book Agent of the Church in Cincinnati, was, that the number of the individuals alluded to in the preamble be specified, that the public might see to how small an extent the Conference was chargeable with such conduct. His amendment was adopted, and the number *two* inserted. Still, the delicacy of the Conference was unsatisfied; more was to be done to conciliate public favor, and clear itself from so odious an act. Somebody—we are unable to name the person—moved that the first resolution should be amended, by inserting the names of the guilty individuals—much discussion ensued hereupon. It was thought by some, that such a measure, if adopted, would subject the offending brethren to no little danger. Their persons might be assailed—lynch law put in operation. It was, at all events, needlessly severe. Others insisted that the Conference should be relieved entirely from the odium of such conduct—that public censure should be located just where it was merited—that the individuals themselves would, no doubt, feel honored by such notoriety, &c. Rev. Mr. Sorin, of the Philadelphia Conference, was, if we remember aright, particularly desirous that this amendment should be passed. Rev. Mr. Smith, of Richmond, Virginia, advocated it strenuously. This gentleman rose under great excitement, and spoke most vehemently. We remember explicitly one of his sayings—uttered with sounding emphasis. Speaking of the propriety of designating the offending brethren—'Let them,' said he, '*be brought forth in all the length and breadth of their DAMNING INIQUITY.*'

"The amendment was lost, by a considerable majority.

"The Conference adjourned to meet at three o'clock. P. M. Met accordingly, when the same subject was resumed. The anti-abolitionists occupied the whole time of the morning session. N. Lovings thought if he was one of the brethren who have, through indiscretion, detained this body so long: he should feel bad. He spoke of the 'recklessness in the course of those brethren who have lectured,' of their 'agitating this miserable subject.' After much, *very much*, had been said upon that side, and after making several attempts in vain to put in a word, Mr. Storrs asked, 'Have any of these brethren who have so long been inveighing against the course of the brethren who are supposed to have lectured, been to those brethren to ask any explanation in re-

gard to what they did do or say ?' I am acquainted with those brethren, and know their course. They had 'got up no abolition meeting in this city, as had been said ; they had been invited to attend a *regular* meeting of the Cincinnati Anti-Slavery Society,—and having no appointment to preach that evening,' and being on no committee that met, they went as invited—and when there they made some remarks.

" Mr Light, of Missouri, moved to refer the whole subject to a committee, to report in the morning. He thought the proceedings in which they were engaged were of great importance—that they ought to be acted upon, without undue excitement. He thought the state of feeling already too high for that deliberate action which was called for. He knew of brethren, who had made up their opinions on abolition—who would be willing to speak out on it boldly in its condemnation, who yet could not subscribe to every expression of the resolution.

" Mr. Leigh, of Virginia, opposed the reference. He feared that more time would be consumed in arguing this incidental motion than ought to be consumed on the main question.

" Mr. Grant, of New York, was in favor of the reference. It was too late to say, there were not two sides to this question. The abolitionists had unhappily taken that which was most effectual for the disturbance of the Church. He had made it daily the subject of earnest prayer. He yet believed, that some means satisfactory and safe could be adopted. He could not find it in his heart to grind the abolitionists down. He was not disposed to say they were less honest than himself—or, he than they. He had, also, a good opinion of the brethren from the slaveholding States. It would be no advantage to the brethren in the slaveholding States to have the question determined in the manner contemplated by the resolutions, or to wound the feelings of the brethren from the north. It was, by far, the most important measure that had ever been before the General Conference. He desired it should be settled, so that there should be produced an entire reciprocity of feeling in the members living in the north and south. He could not suppose that any thing else was desirable to the brethren. He said this in reference to the twofold cause of excitement known to exist. First, the misrepresentations which had been made of the south, in the treatment of their slaves, and the manner in which slaveholders had been held up before the world, in the pictorial representations so prodigally distributed by the abolitionists :—secondly, the misrepresentations to which the abolitionists had been subjected, as to their motives, designs and ultimate objects. Whilst he disapproved of any language which was not conciliatory towards those who dif-

ferred from him, yet he was an anti-abolitionist, and an advocate for any measures for putting an end to every thing that would retard or interrupt our Zion.

" Mr. Roszel, of Maryland, (the mover of the resolutions,) spoke with much spirit in opposition to the reference. He had, on a former occasion, attended a camp meeting—some disorderly persons came to disturb the congregation. The disturbers were reasoned with, mildly and kindly—their reply was rough and insolent—' you must not hurt our feelings—nor touch our characters—nor wound our honor—nor assail our rights, &c.,' whilst these same trespassers did not hesitate to wound the feelings, and trample on the rights of the five hundred or thousand persons, making up the congregation. Of such a character was the conduct of the abolitionists.

" He would not call in question the motives of any brother—he would not say that any abolitionist entertained a bad motive, in urging on this *miserable* and agitating subject—which had disturbed the whole work committed to the charge, and placed under the care of the Methodists, on this continent, more than any other question that had arisen. But whilst he did this, he was not one of those who would use *butter and honey* with them. He would take a strong and decided course with the abolitionists. Nothing else would do for such people. For they had pledged themselves in the most sacred and solemn manner to prosecute their object; and they seemed by their earnestness, to think they were doing Godservice. He felt satisfied, that no language in the resolutions was any too strong for them. It was due not only to the General Conference, but to the citizens of this place, and the people elsewhere, to reprobate what they had done, and what they were doing in the strongest terms—the stronger the language employed, the safer the course.

" The public already know the sentiments of this Conference—that it was strenuously opposed to abolition. A *milk and water course*, would not do. It would be almost as well to say nothing, as not to speak in the strongest language of reprobation. He would not boast of what he had done in former days—nor would he speak, now, of what had been his opinions and his efforts on the subject of slavery in by-gone times. They were known to all. His opinions had undergone no change.

" Whilst he entertained them, he could not but look with entire reprobation on the doings of the abolitionists, those disturbers of the whole country—who were fixing the yoke more firmly on the neck of the slave—who were injuring and distracting the churches, and destroying the souls of the slaves, by hindering the access

which they had heretofore had to them, so long as they [the Methodist ministers,] had been identified, in no measure, with the abolitionists. Let this General Conference, said Mr. R., only come out on this subject—let every man in it, speak out boldly in opposition to abolition ; and one hundred times more good would be done by the Methodist Church in relation to this subject, than she had ever yet done, and no church would occupy a higher place in Christendom than she.

" He professed not to be unduly warm or excited by the subject under discussion. Nevertheless, the brethren who attended the abolition meeting had brought on the General Conference severe and injurious reflection. The citizens knew all about it, and there was great excitement among them. He had been told, since the adjournment of the forenoon, that they knew the individuals who had acted so improperly, as members of the General Conference, in attending the abolition meeting. Here Mr. Roszell threw out a strong intimation, that there might probably be some personal danger to the guilty individuals, in walking the streets—so exasperated, had he been persuaded were the citizens against them. He further said, that *he* knew them, and that if it was denied, he could prove who they were—he could furnish the Conference testimony, conclusive, too, of their having lectured at the abolition meeting. Their lecturing, indeed, was publicly talked of in the city—every body knew it. Besides this, he knew, and he could prove, that the abolitionists belonging to the Conference had, by no means, confined themselves to lecturing publicly on this agitating subject, but they had been lecturing privately, and repeatedly bringing it up in conversation with individuals. They seemed indeed to be fearless of all consequences. They had introduced their petitions here, signed by great numbers—many of whom were women and girls. Whether even *their* names were properly to the petitions, he would not assume on himself to say. He had once heard of a dead man's name being signed to an important paper—the pen having been put into his hand, and directed by the hand of a living man. But would they mention the numbers who had signed memorials and petitions in favor of abolition ? Had *he* tried to obtain petitions against it, there would have been not 10 or 20, but 500,000. In conclusion, why refer the resolutions, said Mr. R.? They were right in principle, and sufficiently respectful in language. He hoped they would not be referred, but be acted upon with that promptitude which the nature of the case and the state of public opinion demanded.

" Mr. Clark, of New York, spoke in favor of the reference. He did not hesitate to say he disapproved of what was intended to

be censured. Yet he thought that the resolutions, in their present form, embraced more than the circumstances of the case before them called for. It was very desirable that unanimity should be arrived at, as nearly as possible. The resolutions, as they stood, would not, he apprehended, pass with that unanimity, which was necessary to give them their full effect. It was our wish, to satisfy the community around us—the American community—the Methodist connection, that this Conference disapproved of abolitionism. To do this, with full effect, as near an approach as possible to unanimity was greatly to be desired.

"He was happy in becoming more intimately acquainted with the brethren in the slaveholding States. He had begun to find, on hearing their views more fully, that we were not so far apart as had been supposed. They had explained a great many misrepresentations of the state of things connected with slavery in the south. They had, to be sure, their peculiar views in relation to slavery, yet it was found, that mutual explanations had a strong tendency to bring them nearer together, as brethren. He could not but be aware of the difficulties in which the brethren of the south were placed—he felt for them; yet he trusted this would interpose no obstacle to that unanimous action which was so greatly to be desired.

"Mr. Payne, of Alabama, began his remarks by suggesting the propriety of exemption from every thing that partook of passion in the discussion of a subject, containing in itself such strong elements of excitement. He intended to observe this temper himself—not to be unduly moved. The South, indeed, had thus far shown herself calm, silent, unaggressive; and he doubted not she would continue to do so. He was proceeding to answer an objection taken by some one who had preceded him, (Mr. Clark, we believe,) as to the power of the General Conference to pass a censure, such as was demanded by the resolution—saying it had been gravely denied that the General Conference possessed that power. He spoke with no suppressed animation, saying—'And can it be possible that such authority can be denied to the General Conference—the highest tribunal of the Church, having control over the whole Church—to censure the conduct of its own members when they became offensive, *criminal?*' [Here Mr. P. was called to order by Mr. Sanford, of New York, on the ground that such epithets ought not to be used against brethren.]

"Mr. P. spoke of the excited state of feeling which existed in this city, against the two brethren who had attended the abolition meeting. He had been asked for their names—he refused to give them, out of regard for their safety. The indignation at their

course was felt by the whole community. He believed it would meet the disapprobation of all the members in the Conference. [Mr. Scott said audibly, '*Not all.*']

"It was but the other day, brethren had said they were aware of the condition of things at the South. But what has been doing, and to what purposes are Methodist ministers converting their office? Are not itinerant preachers carrying about with them petitions for the abolition of slavery? Do they not employ themselves in obtaining subscribers to memorials to Conferences on the same subject, and in lecturing to abolition societies all over the land? Where are we, sir? asked Mr. Payne. I am glad, sir, we are in the State of Ohio. But even here, in this free State, what would be the consequence, if an abolition meeting were now advertised to be held at the Court-House in this city? If such a thing were projected, even here, you would see the indignant crowd gathering in the streets, and presenting a dark and dense mass, making its way to the appointed place, to pour out its vengeance on those who might be rash enough to engage in such a scheme.

"It would seem, that nothing can cure them, [the abolitionists,] they stop at nothing—still they persist, notwithstanding the impediments which they are continually encountering in popular hatred and persecutions. They persevere in aggravating the slaveholder—using against him reproachful terms—injurious epithets. Not satisfied with the extent of their operations in the north, they are here, in the west, laying their train, &c.

"He could not go back home, identified in any way, with this Conference, on the subject of abolition. He concluded by asking unanimity in the rejection of the amendment, and in the support of the resolutions.

"Mr. Elliot, of Pittsburg, rose to propose an amendment, declaring it to be highly imprudent, for any of the members of the General Conference to deliver lectures on abolition during its session. Mr. E. trusted that the action of the General Conference, would be of such a character, that all the brethren who had joined abolition societies, would be induced to forsake them—that others who had not joined them, would be persuaded to abstain from doing so, and that METHODISM, instead of abolitionism, or anything else, would be the great object on which they would all unite. He strongly disapproved the publications of the abolitionists—they unjustly misrepresented southern brethren, and exaggerated the unhappy state of things in the slaveholding States. Methodism had greatly suffered from its influence—and so far as abolitionism was connected with Methodism, he wished to pass on it in the

strongest terms that ought be used, the disapprobation of this Conference. The zeal of Mr. E. in behalf of Methodism, so far outstripped any that had yet been displayed, that, joined to his peculiar manner, it occasioned some little merriment among the spectators, and even among the members of the Conference.

"Mr. Levings, of New York, opposed any substantial alterations of the resolutions. He would assent to none, except such as were merely verbal. The sentiments expressed in the resolutions met his approbation. Ever since the commencement of the Conference, the abolition brethren had sought to bring the subject of abolition into it. There had been a recklessness in their course, that seemed to spurn all customary restraints—a determination to argue this agitating subject, that set at defiance all the usual admonitions of prudence. Those of them who attended the meetings had been previously spoken to, and advised against it, by their brethren; and even the Bishops themselves had spoken to them with the same object, and had warned them of the consequences which would follow,—consequences which were now too apparent.

"As to the reference, he was opposed to it. It is true, a *committee on slavery* had been appointed. But why refer it to them? What advantage will they have in discussing this matter? Can they present it in a more tangible form? No. A course of this kind would only enable the abolitionists to press forward into still greater prominence—to further notice by this Conference—and this '*miserable*' question will derive from it a large additional amount of importance. The *language* of the resolutions was not at all too strong for the circumstances and the occasion to which it was to be applied. The Conference had an undoubted right to take notice of the *official* conduct of its members whilst in session. Having this right, it was clearly his opinion it ought to be exercised on the present occasion, for putting an end to this matter.

"Mr. Young, of Ohio, was opposed to the amendment. He was, in ordinary cases, opposed to harsh language; but the present, he conceived, was a case which, so far from calling for mild and gentle words, *ought to be marked with asperity*. As to the publications of the abolitionists and their lecturers on abolition,—he had never read any of the first, and had nothing to do with the last. They were '*implements and utensils*' that he did not wish to have about him—he had no desire to handle them, or to touch them in any way. In no fashion had he, or did he desire, any knowledge of them. A great deal had been said about Roman Catholicism, but he thought that there was no comparison. The Roman Catholics believed all that was deemed essential to salvation. The objection to *them* was, they believed a little too much, a little more

than was necessary. He thought there was no analogy between Catholicism and *modern* abolitionism.

"The latter was at war with all sense of decency, it outraged all our notions of good order and propriety, and was, in its every feature, utterly intolerable. He was opposed to any amendment. Instead of allaying the public excitement now existing, and blown up by the unjustifiable conduct of those who had gone to the abolition meeting, it would tend to raise it still higher. If we should adopt this amendment, we would become responsible for the protection of their persons from public outrage. Let us then, by passing the resolutions, allay the public excitement, so that every brother may pass the street in safety.

"Mr. Crowder, of Virginia, spoke in opposition to the amendment. He contended, if we rightly remember the drift of his remarks, that the Conference had full jurisdiction over the conduct of its members, whilst attending it in discharge of official duties. The main subject, slavery in the south, was one in which the north had no interest, and of course no right to interfere with in any way. The course of the abolitionists, too, was doing great injury to the slave, in drawing closer the bonds of slavery, and rendering his case more and more hopeless. It also prevented the spread of the gospel, by shutting up the access heretofore enjoyed by the Methodist ministers to the slaves. The masters, now jealous of the preachers generally, excluded from their slaves Methodist preachers, as well as others. Believing it altogether important to the most beneficial disposition of the whole question that the resolutions should pass in their present form, he deplored every thing that went to defeat that object by sustaining the amendment.

"Several other gentlemen made brief remarks before the question on the amendments was taken,—among them, Mr. Storrs and Mr. Norris, the two members who were referred to, though not named, in the first resolution. They said, that the persons who attended and spoke, at the Cincinnati Anti-Slavery Society, had at that time no official duty to perform—they had not been appointed to preach, nor were they called to do any business in committee. Besides, it was a regular meeting of that society. They had delivered no formal lecture. Notwithstanding, had the sentiments of the General Conference, in relation to their attending the meeting, been as well known by them before they had pledged themselves to be present, as it was now, they would have taken a different course.

"After a few remarks from the mover, Mr. Roszell, the vote was taken, and the amendment lost.

"Mr. Roszell again made some spirited remarks in favor of the resolutions, and urged on the Conference their *immediate* adop-

tion. He appeared a little testy at the delay occasioned by discussion.

"Mr. Scott, of Massachusetts, obtained the floor, and commenced a calm and dispassionate examination of the resolutions. He began by asking the patience of members, as he would probably do the principal part of the speaking on behalf of the abolitionists who were in the Conference. It was a noble and lofty effort; calm, dignified, generous, Christian. He showed no waspishness, nor petulance against those who differed with him, and who had been so prodigal in their reprobation of abolitionists. He was several times interrupted by his impatient adversaries—yet his calmness and self-possession were in no measure disturbed, even for a moment. The dignity of the experienced debater—understanding his subject in all its aspects—calmly taking up the admissions of his opponents and routing them with the very weapons their own unacquaintance with the subject and their intemperate passion had so abundantly supplied; directing them all, with consummate skill—yet with the kindness and forbearance of the Christian; in all these essentials of religious discussion, Mr. Scott presented himself in striking and honorable contrast with nearly all, if not all, who supported the resolutions."

When he commenced, for the first fifteen minutes he was continually interrupted. Dr. Bangs had endeavored to prevent the speaker from going into the question of slavery, by submitting to the chair that it was not in order. It being decided to be in order, he proceeded to discuss it at length.*

"Mr. Crowder rose to reply to the last speaker. He laid down the proposition, that there were difficulties which forbade the occupying of the ground taken by Mr. Scott, (this was that slavery was morally and always wrong.) The difficulties were, first, of a scriptural sort, and here the speaker took occasion to observe that slaveholders had evidently been unchristianized by the brother who last spoke; for if slaveholding was a sin, of course slaveholders were criminal. Mr. Crowder failed to notice the distinction between motive and action, the morality of a system and the morality of men. He referred to Leviticus, 25th chapter, where we learn that the Jews were permitted to buy servants of the heathen round about and hold them as such forever. Abraham, too, the Father of the Faithful, bought and held slaves, and the Centurion who besought Jesus that his servant might be healed, was also a slaveholder;

* See Memoir of O. Scott, by the author, p. 90.

and yet Jesus, so far from rebuking him for his conduct, said he had not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

"The Apostles, at the beginning of their mission, found slavery, of a far worse character than southern slavery, existing in the Roman Empire, and yet in no case did they intermeddle with it. If thou mayst use thy liberty rather; but let every man abide in the calling in which he is called. And there too was the case of Onesimus he was a slave; still, St. Paul acknowledged the right of his master and sent him back. No other example than that of our Lord and his apostles is obligatory on us. He, Mr. C., was an experimental man—would not contend with abstractions, abstractions were mere nonentities.

"There were difficulties arising out of the history of slavery and the movements in relation to it. In the days of Wesley there was no crusade against slavery. Watson was some time hesitating before he would connect himself with an abolition society. Great Britain and the United States held different relations to slavery. A wide ocean separated the former from her colonies; here we are all together.

"Besides, no compensation is proposed to slaveholders by abolitionists. The abolition movements, moreover, were directly opposed to the interests of that most noble society, the Colonization Society.

"When a Dutch vessel first disgorged a cargo of slaves in Virginia, that State protested against it; but England imposed slavery on the colony, and men of the New England States, especially citizens of Providence, were engaged in this slave-trade.

"There were difficulties of a political character. By the compact of union, slavery was put beyond the control of the North. At a celebrated meeting in Boston, Mr. Otis had publicly contended, that inasmuch as slavery was known to exist at the time the States became one confederacy, and as the Northern States nevertheless formed a union with the South, the agitation of the question now was in fact a breach of the contract they solemnly made. The question was emphatically a *political* one: religion forbids ministers of the gospel to intermeddle with political rights or privileges. Their work was to save souls. They must be subject to the powers that be, but how could this be the case, so long as they would intermeddle with such questions. The question cannot be made any other than a political question. These societies ~~assailed~~ directly our compact of union—principles and relations established by most solemn engagements and oaths.

"We were sometimes accused of cruelty—of hugging the evil to our bosoms. Slavery was amongst ourselves, it should be handled

by ourselves. He was born in its midst; his father was a slaveholder. He would not have slaves when his father offered them to him: he preferred *money*. He married a lady whose father owned slaves. The father deceased, and he fell heir to a number of slaves. He wished to be cleared from them; proposed they should go to Liberia; only one consented. He then told them he could not keep them; they must get other masters, or go out of the State. They got other masters. He had preached to slaves—met with them in class. Slaves were rarely treated with cruelty; they loved their masters; they were bound up in their masters, and their masters in them. He ought, however, not to omit mentioning one circumstance connected with his own case. When he was about selling his slaves, his wife desired to retain two of them; to this he had consented, and these two he owned yet. They had wept on his departure for the General Conference. He was in the habit of calling them to the fireside and explaining to them the word of God. He meant no insult to his northern brethren, but his cook dressed as well as any of the wives of those brethren. They were not deprived of privileges, although kidnapped—stolen from their own country, thousands of them have been converted by the religion of Jesus Christ. Thus has God brought good out of evil.

"Abolitionism goes to break up missionary operations in behalf of the slaves; and wherever cruelty exists, it aggravates and confirms it.

"Slavery has no tendency to produce amalgamation. In proportion to the number of the people, there are more mulattoes in the north than in the south.

"The gospel forbids adultery and fornication in express terms, but not slavery.

"Modern abolitionism tended to destroy the fairest prospects of the republic—and blast the hopes of surrounding nations, who are looking to us eagerly for the solution of the problem, whether man is capable of self-government. Let this crusade against the compact of our union go on, and the Union is severed—the Church is severed. Then will the chances of political aspirants be increased, and despotism will be the result. Civil and religious liberty will be destroyed, and the hopes of nations will perish. Modern abolitionism tended to such results. Look at the epithets used—murderers, robbers, thieves; the whole vocabulary had been ransacked for opprobrious epithets. He therefore would vote for the resolutions disapproving the course of these brethren. He would also, with his whole heart, unqualifiedly give his voice for the passage of the second one, denouncing abolitionism.

"Mr. Winslow said that he did not intend to confine his remarks to the first resolution—he would reply directly to brother Scott's argument. He would preface what he had to say by a few remarks which might appear egotistical. He was from the extreme North. He arose with perfect calmness, without agitation, without a single angry feeling towards any brother. But occupying the situation he did, feeling his responsibility to his God, to the Church, and to the interests of humanity, he could not be without strong emotion."

"He would meet the brother on the fundamental ground of his question—would examine his strong moral views of slavery. It had been assumed, that slavery was wrong in some circumstances, in no circumstances, or in all circumstances. Now he designed to prove from the brother's own admission, that slavery was right in all circumstances. Jehovah had permitted—had regulated slavery: would he permit—would he regulate that which was morally wrong? Could there be a blinding influence, strong enough to induce any one to charge God with sanctioning crime? It would be needless to refer to particular scriptures; but many passages did exist which established beyond controversy, that God did permit *perpetual, hereditary slavery*. This admitted, it was plain, that circumstances might deprive slavery of an immoral character. He would have opposed slavery in its origin. It was as clear as the morning sun that slavery in the abstract is wrong. But is it wrong now in the Southern States? This is the point in dispute between abolitionists and *moderate* abolitionists. Have we not seen, that circumstances justified it in the case of the Hebrews? If circumstances can justify it, he thought they existed in the South. Another question would arise—ought Christians to endeavor to change these circumstances? He had no doubt, they ought—that it was ~~unnecessary~~ for them to do so. But was the course of abolitionists right? ~~unnecessary~~ ^{unnecessary} not. It was most unpropitious, most injurious—and destined to effect precisely what was most opposite to their purposes."

"He was not born in a slave state,—he was a Pennsylvanian by birth. He had been brought up to believe a slaveholder as ~~right~~ ^{unnecessary} as a horse thief; but he had gone to the south, &c., where long residence had changed his views; he had become a slaveholder, ~~but~~ ^{unnecessary} slaveholder on principle. There was suspicion about the South. To obviate such suspicion and gain free access to the slaves, as is to do him good, it was highly advantageous for a minister that his master should hold slaves; and he could see no impropriety, nor advantage in members, preachers, presiding elders and even bishops, being slaveholders. Yes, said Mr. W.,

however novel the sentiment may be, however startling it may be to many, I avow this opinion boldly, and without any desire to conceal it.

"The brother admitted that Congress had no power of legislation on slavery in the States. The only influence, therefore, abolitionism could exert, was moral in its character—must be exerted over mind. Now, the legislatures of the Slave States only, could abolish slavery; therefore, this moral influence must be exerted on them—he affirmed, that abolition, in its influence on those bodies, was directly opposed to that which its friends designed. For the ten years preceding the last three years, there was a constantly increasing disposition to meliorate the condition of the slave. The abolition excitement was got up. In one moment, a paralysis was felt in every nerve of the South—in all those influences, looking to the emancipation of the slave. Though a slaveholder himself, no abolitionist felt more sympathy for the slave than he did—none had rejoiced more in the hope of a coming period, when the print of a slave's foot would not be seen on the soil. His heart sank within him, when he contemplated the incendiary influences of abolition. They were incendiary, for they had kindled a flame upon the dearest hopes of the African.

"He and his brethren in the South, were to act on this question—not others for them. Abolition was considered a murderous scheme at the South—here the speaker became so rapid and vehement, that we found it impossible to note accurately what he said. We remember, however, that his fruitful imagination pictured 'mutilated wives,' 'massacred children,' 'burning towns,' 'cities and habitations rendered desolate,' 'slaves freed to be impoverished, to starve, to die,'—consequences which, it was believed, would result from the success of abolition doctrines. Southern legislatures, he said, would never listen to such doctrines—they were deaf, they would be deaf as an adder. The South already looked upon the people of the North as their enemies—thirsting for their blood. A few knew that the body of the North was opposed to such schemes—regarded them as fanatical. And the most favorable view he could take of abolitionists was, that they were carried away by fanaticism.

"The brother had said, that abolitionism had an intimate connection with our missionary operations. It had, but in a very different sense from what the brother meant. He would state a case to illustrate his views. A brother was sent last year to a circuit on the Mississippi coast, comprising three parishes. No sooner were the abolition movements known at the North, than public meetings were called, in two of the parishes, and it was decided in

them, that Methodist preachers should preach no more: because two conferences in the North had avowed themselves in favor of abolition. The third parish was not so hasty—had a little more common sense. A public meeting was called in this, but, owing to the influence of one man, no such prohibitory measure was adopted. This man pledged his honor, his property, his life, in defence of the purity of the preacher's character and motives, and he was allowed to preach amongst them. In the two parishes where so violent measures were taken, the most of the residents were slaves—and preachers had never before been questioned. Let abolitionists proceed, and they would effect nothing better in the South. In the North they might raise a flame, and call it a holy flame, but in the South, it would be the fire of hell.

"Methodists had two sets of fathers—one set, abolitionists. Bishop Asbury's name had been introduced—Bishop Asbury, before his death, was decidedly an abolitionist. Bishop Asbury, at first, was a believer in the doctrines of abolition, and he acted on the belief. Experience convinced him of his error; and his course was changed. It would be amusing, were not the subject so important, to hear brethren talk of the great additional light of modern times. They had said, it was too late in the day to put back this question. They supposed a flood of light had been poured on this subject. The modesty of brethren was great. The fathers of Methodism were thrown into the shade by the increased light of this day. The speaker declared, emphatically, from the North, or Great Britain, we will not receive, we do not want, aid or advice, to help us to rid ourselves of slavery. We will sit in judgment on our own case, we will follow our own course. He would not censure the North for its high assumptions. Neither Great Britain nor the North, however, occupied positions from which they could help the South. The greatest service they could do it, was, to let it alone. The question was a political question, with which none but the South had any thing to do.

"In the sight of Heaven this was their only proper course. It was important to the interests of slaves, and in view of the question of slavery, that there be Christians, who were slaveholders. Christian ministers should be slaveholders, and diffused throughout the South. Yes, sir, Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, should be slaveholders—yes, he repeated it boldly, there should be members, and deacons, and elders, and bishops too, who were slaveholders. For if slaveholding were a valid reason for excluding a man from office, it was a valid reason for excluding him from membership. The South *should* be heard—should lose nothing from him. Hear it or not—that was not his concern, it was the concern of the Conference.

" He did not wish to be misunderstood in relation to the first resolution. There was great indelicacy, great indecorum, great disrespect to the Conference, to the city, to public opinion—in the conduct of the brethren, proposed to be censured. He had no doubt as to the propriety of censure. They merited reprehension. Abolition movements should be reprehended ; for they were evil, and only evil, always and every where. It had been insinuated that he wanted milk and water resolutions. This was, as to himself, a novel accusation. He had commonly been charged with too much boldness—too much severity, but never before accused in this fashion. He knew not how much animal courage he might possess—but to moral and political courage he avowed his claim. Indeed a distinguished politician of the South said of him, that he would make an excellent politician, only he had too much candor. His character must indeed be essentially changed, if he could keep back the truth, to conciliate the good opinion of any.

" Mr. Sanford thought it due to the delegation with which he was connected, that it should be heard.

" They occupied a middle ground, as they thought, between two extremes. They were no abolitionists, but held their peculiar sentiments. On the abstract question of slavery, their opinions were no other than such as are expressed in their Discipline : they were Methodists in this particular. They regretted the existence of slavery ; but it was beyond their power—they could not prevent its existence. He regretted the measures of abolition, as being, in their tendency, injurious. He was a warm and decided colonizationist. That institution had been productive of much good—numerous slaves had been emancipated by it, but its operations had been retarded by abolition movements. These movements had done much evil and very little good, and had retarded the accomplishment of the good that might have been wrought, in view of the interests of the slaves. The people of the north deplored abolition movements. They abhorred slavery, but believed it morally wrong to agitate the question in the north, to the injury of the south. It would only rivet the chains upon the slave. So strong was public feeling against abolition, that in a certain place, the people, suspecting a preacher of holding abolition sentiments, declared they would not hear him preach. The speaker said a few other things, by way of disclaiming all connection with abolitionists ; for which he received little or no credit from Mr. Smith, who here interrupted him, on a point of order, and said, if we remember right, that the brother seemed to be one of that class of men who neither did harm nor good.

" Mr. Roszel said, had he known beforehand, that so much ex-

traneous matter would have been introduced into the discussions, he would not have offered the resolutions to the Conference. It would be idle, he thought, to attempt to answer the arguments of the brother. [Scott.] If the resolutions had had the confluent small-pox, these arguments had not come near enough to catch the infection. He then read the resolutions. He said that untrammeled by this unhappy excitement, many of them, before abolitionists were born, were engaged in meliorating the condition of the slave population. Whenever the consequences of any measures for the removal of any evil were worse than the evil itself, the prosecutors of such measures stood charged before God as criminals. Abolitionists reminded him of Herod—when Herod had promised the damsel with an oath to give her whatever she might ask, and she had asked for the head of John the Baptist, the king, rather than break his promise, would commit murder. Abolitionists had prevented *them* from acting. They knew nothing about them. In the south, they had been successfully engaged in freeing slaves, but abolition had shut up the way. Houses of worship had been burnt, religious privileges taken away, and the houses of their colored people mutilated in Baltimore. Never had one individual been benefitted by abolition.

"Dr. Capers, of South Carolina, rose to state some facts, with which he was personally acquainted. Methodism had been introduced into South Carolina, under very favorable circumstances. The doctrine of the forgiveness of sins, by repentance, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, unless the Baptists formed an exception, was not, at that time, preached in South Carolina. The community was in an unprejudiced state. They soon formed a society in Charleston, composed of as respectable and worthy people as ever entered into the composition of any church. The church, to be sure, labored under some disadvantages; but under none as connected with slavery. He would narrate a little anecdote:—A preacher stopped, on Cooper's river, at the house of Mr. Ball, one of the foremost planters in the State. When evening came, and the period of work was over, the preacher proposed that the negroes should be assembled, in order that he might speak to them, on the subject of religion. The proposal was immediately responded to, and information forthwith sent off to the neighboring plantations; so that a congregation of from one to two thousand was speedily assembled. Mr. Ball was so well pleased, that he desired to retain the preacher as his chaplain, and that he might preach to his negroes. This, the speaker intimated, was then the state of things. They had free access to the plantations. As much was done as could be done. Dr. Coke, about this time,

made his first visit, but passed hastily through the country. On his second visit, a different aspect was exhibited. The South had then but little participation in the affairs of the Church. It came to pass, that, in 1806, the General Conference, composed three-fourths of northern brethren, was induced to take these measures, to which the brother from the New England Conference referred in his speech. Those measures were reprobatory of slavery, and were accompanied by an exhortation, to get up memorials, on the subject of slavery, to the legislatures. George Dorrel, representative from the South Carolina Conference, protested against these measures. The jealousies of the people were awakened. Methodist preachers were objects of suspicion, and considered enemies to the public peace.

"In Charleston, one of the purest and most noble of their ministers, George Dorrel, was dragged, like a felon, to the pump, and only rescued at the point of the sword. Methodist preachers could not save themselves—they were put down. There were not many noble then, not many rich, not many high; they were reduced to the most pitiable condition. A re-action ensued; they began to be pitied; persecution ceased. Their meeting-houses began to be crowded. The black people, without them, deprived of gospel privileges, began to enjoy them again. The galleries of the churches were filled with them. Again and again were the brethren interfered with, and repeatedly taken from the pulpit, because of the number of blacks present. In 1811, they had little or no access to the blacks. An instance would illustrate. Brother Donnelly, wishing to preach to the colored people in a certain place, and baptize some among them, had to set out at midnight, upon his benevolent enterprise. Another instance:—about twelve miles from Charleston was another place where it was desirable to preach to the colored people. They had never before heard Jesus Christ preached. But one house in the neighborhood could be occupied for this purpose, and that was a grog-shop. It was resolved, however, to preach there. By some means, it came to the ears of the neighboring slaveholders. They determined to prevent it. A mob was to be raised in grand style; the negroes were to be punished, and the preacher ducked in a duck-pond hard by. The time came, and it fell to his lot to go—but there was no disturbance. That very spot was the place of his nativity—he was well known there; and, also, it was understood, that his connexions were of such a character, as to secure him, to a certain extent, against any personal violence. But that preaching place was abandoned, for Methodist preachers were under the ban. At length, people began to consider that many of them were slave-

holders—why should they be insurrectionists? This single circumstance went far to raise them above suspicion.

"Dr. Capers narrated some other circumstances, but our notes are here deficient. These, together with the facts he had adduced, he brought forward, to show how delicate was the question of slavery; in what peculiar, perplexing circumstances it placed the southern brethren; how much injury had been done to them, as well as to the slaves, by northern interference; and how much more injury would inevitably result, in the same way, from the efforts of abolitionists. He called upon his abolition brethren to beware—to pause, before they proceeded farther in their misguided efforts. Whilst he was narrating what difficulties the Methodist ministers had labored under—what they had endured, both of privation and persecution for the slave—the affection and gratitude of the slaves, &c., &c., many tears were shed by the slaveholding members of the Conference. Their emotion was great, while the doctor, a slaveholder himself, as we are informed, was spreading before them the picture of their many afflictions, and their eyes were imploringly directed at times toward the place where their abolition brethren sat.

"The amount of all we could gather was, that ministers of the gospel, in the south, if they did their duty faithfully, were liable to persecution.—After Dr. Capers had concluded, the Conference had a recess till 3 o'clock, P. M.

"*Afternoon Session.*—There was much small talk. We have notes of only one member's speech. We think this was delivered, on the offering of an amendment by Mr. Scott. The debate had been generally gotten through with, and it seemed to be understood that the resolutions would pass. The question was about to be taken, when Mr. Scott moved to amend the second resolution, by inserting immediately after the words, 'Abolitionism in whole and in part,' the following—'and that we also disapprove of slavery.' This gave rise to some remarks, when a member suggested that it would be better to amend, by inserting the words of the Discipline in reference to slavery, which are 'that we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery.' Mr. Scott immediately agreed to adopt this, and offered it in the place of his original amendment.

"An animated discussion now arose on the adoption of this amendment. The majority were doubtless a good deal embarrassed. One, in his simplicity said,—he did not conceive how any brother could object to incorporating into the resolution, a sentiment which they had already avowed, as a church. But he evidently mistook the mark. There was great objection. Southern members soon placed the matter in its true light. The incorporation of this

sentiment in the resolutions would neutralize entirely the original design and tendency of them. If the amendment were adopted, the resolutions could not be sent to the south. The amendment would be construed as designed to cloak the real opinions of the Conference. That body would most certainly be charged with abolitionism. Mr. Winans, of Mississippi, begged leave to state a fact, which would show how unpopular, under present circumstances, would be any such amendment. The particulars, we are unable to recollect, but this was the amount. An excitement had been occasioned in New Orleans against Methodists. The mayor of the city had been informed, by some interested person, of the article in the Discipline, in relation to slavery.

" From this it was inferred, that the Methodists were genuine abolitionists. The excitement was not allayed, until a clergyman of another persuasion took a Discipline, went to the mayor, showed him the article, and explained to him, that it had been inserted in the *early* period of the Church, that it was not a new thing. We cannot give the precise words of Mr. Winans ; but the impression made was, that the article in relation to slavery was introduced, when the circumstances of the Church were different from what they are now :—that *now* the article is in fact *a dead letter*.

" The members from the free States, when they saw the stand taken by their southern brethren on the subject, were generally in favor of rejecting the amendment,—not, they asserted, because they did not adhere to the sentiments of their Discipline ; but the object was now, to allay the excitement of abolition, and satisfy the public mind of their opposition to it.

" With regard to slavery, their opinion was already expressed, and stood out in their Discipline to the notice of the world. Mr. Scott thought, that, if it were necessary, on the one hand to guard against abolition, it was no less necessary on the other to guard against slavery. He thought this was indeed an alarming period, when Methodist ministers shrunk from openly declaring, what they avowed in the Discipline as their creed. He did hope that brethren would not reject the amendment, and thus virtually abrogate a part of their own Discipline. He made many other forcible and eloquent remarks, in the midst of which he was called to order by Mr. Holmes of the Pittsburg Conference, who supposed that the speaker had violated one of the rules of order, in speaking twice on the same subject. Mr. Scott was pronounced by the chair in order, because, *before*, he had spoken to the original resolution ; *now*, he was speaking to the amendment. Mr. Holmes manifested a disposition to persist, which, however, not being encouraged, he sat down.

" Not long after Mr. Scott had concluded, Mr. Smith, of Virginia, began by professing to be a *man*, a *Christian*, a *gentleman*. As a man, he had feelings which had been whipped and goaded on every side during this debate ; as a Christian, he disavowed, before God and the Conference, harboring any unkind sentiments towards his abolition brethren. He could not entertain harsh feelings towards any man. Reflections had passed through his mind, while considering the unfortunate situation in which those brethren had placed themselves, which brought tears to his eyes.

" He was sorry for the course his southern brethren had taken in relation to these resolutions. The abstract question of slavery, they ought not to have discussed. Indulgence in such discussions was lowering their dignity—prostrating them, before the American nation. Slavery was to be looked at, not in the abstract, but the concrete—as it was in *fact*. Abolition was fraught with the most mischievous consequences. He here read an extract from, we presume, an abolition paper—to this amount, that any American citizen who holds another as a slave, is guilty of a crime irreconcilable with the spirit of Christianity. He remarked that the *inference* from this was, that the slaveholder was no Christian—could be no Christian. ' Must such men,' said he, ' whip in hand, booted and spurred, ride over our feelings ? ' As we live—as God lives—it becomes brethren to pause. Modern abolitionism proclaimed her own consummate folly, when, in the same breath, on the very heels of the declaration, that slaveholders are criminals against God and man—guilty of the most God-provoking crimes, she turns round and tells them that she does not unchristianize them.

" Here Mr. Scott rose and asked explicitly whether the speaker had any allusion to him—for if so, he was misrepresenting him. Mr. Smith turned towards him, and exclaimed, ' I have no more to do with that brother, than if he did not exist ; ' and with great heat he added, ' I wish to God, he were in Heaven.' He added something in an under tone about wishing all abolitionists there, and himself, if ever he should become one. Some remarks were here made by the chair,* when Mr. Smith said he had so often been called by these men a man-stealer, &c., that by this time he was perfectly used to them. That brother (alluding to Mr. Scott) was perfectly sincere, but *he* knew nothing more about abolitionism than *he* did about slavery.

" He then read another extract from the same paper, giving, as

* Bishop Roberts presided. These remarks were a rebuke for such language, as it was equivalent to wishing brother Scott dead.

he said, another feature of abolitionism. The amount of it was, that slavery should be renounced now and forever. The objection to it was, that it was impracticable. The attempt to do such an act, would array against them all the feeling of the south. If success chanced to attend the measures of abolition, all those consequences would inevitably follow, which had been depicted by the brother, who had spoken in the morning.

" Modern abolitionism was to be seen in what it did, rather than in what it professed. In its effects, it was inflammatory in the north, and incendiary in the south. Its withering influence had been felt in the church—in the quarterly meeting—in the class room. The blight of heaven followed, wherever it prevailed. Brethren from the north would testify to this fact; if they would not, he would upon oath. He knew the societies—the associations in which this effect was manifested.

" Modern abolitionism was a great political and religious heresy. Its design was to array all the moral and religious feeling of the people against the political institutions of the land; and it was in direct contravention of the book he held in his hand, [the New Testament.] The apostle Paul, when he went forth to preach the Gospel, found slavery existing in the world and recognized it. He relied on preaching Christ crucified, as the great means for remedying every evil. He formed no abolition societies. He [Mr. Smith,] and his brethren of the south, expected, by preaching Christ, to accomplish all that could be accomplished. These abolition brethren are for interfering with the political institutions of the land. They had engaged in a crusade—harangues, petitions, memorials, addressing political assemblies—nothing was left untried. In all these respects, they had departed from the example of the apostles. The Discipline of the Church, moreover, authorized no interference with the political institutions of the country.

" They, of the south, entreated of their brethren of the north, just to let them alone. If they would not hear to this, why then they must part. Either abolitionists would have to separate from them, or they from abolitionists. Such inevitably would be the result, unless the brethren should change their course.

" After a little more discussion, the question was called for, and on the votes being counted, it was found, that 123 voted *against the amendment—against incorporating in the resolution, that they were as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery.* The members of the New England and New Hampshire delegations, fourteen in number, voted for it, and one of Pittsburg Conference.

" The vote was then taken on the resolutions themselves—they

were both carried by large majorities. A resolution was also introduced to have them published in the city journals generally. This, we understand, was afterwards reconsidered and recalled—the publishing order being limited to the *Western Christian Advocate*.

Those who distinguished themselves as the friends of despised abolitionism, deserve to be known and honored. Their names are, J. S. Barris, of the *Pittsburg Conference*; Joseph A. Merrill, Orange Scott, Charles Virgin, Phineas Crandall, Isaac Bonney, of the *New England Conference*; and John F. Adams, George Sterns, Samuel Norris, C. D. Cahoon, Samuel Kelly, Elihu Scott, E. J. Scott, Jared Perkins, Schuyler Chamberlain, of the *New Hampshire Conference*.

A distinguished citizen of Cincinnati, not an abolitionist, who was present when the vote was taken, remarked that, considering the occasion, the circumstances, the principles involved, and the vast odds between the members, on each side of that question, he was exceedingly moved with the sublimity of the spectacle which those few brethren presented, when they stood up to be counted, before the Conference and the vast concourse of people, who had assembled to witness the doings of that hour.

Having quoted Mr. Birney's reports, it may be well to say, in evidence of their correctness, that Mr. Winans referred to the report of his speech in the *Philanthropist*, for the purpose of correcting, by its superior accuracy, what he considered a misstatement of Mr. Scott.

Mr. Crowder acknowledged in the presence of the editor, that his speech was fairly and accurately reported in the *Philanthropist*, with the exception of a single instance where he thought the form of expression ambiguous. Even this, he did not think of sufficient importance to call for formal correction.

After the result of this discussion was ascertained, by the vote just recorded, but little excitement was manifest on these questions. Anti-slavery petitions were presented and referred, without debate. Some interest was developed in caucusing for Bishops, as the south was urgent in demanding a slaveholder. The boundary question introduced a brief and spirited discourse about ordaining slaveholding local elders. This the Baltimore Conference refused to allow,

and a circuit bordering on Virginia, yet in their bounds, desired to be set off. This was denied, much to the dissatisfaction of the south. On the 24th of May, the election of Bishops was attended to. Three were chosen; Beverly Waugh, of New York, Wilbur Fisk, of New England, and Thomas A. Morris, of Ohio,—not one being a slaveholder, or from the Southern Conferences. The uneasiness was very manifest. Nor was this dissatisfaction lessened any by an address, prepared by a member of the Conference, embracing a review of the abolition discussion, and an appeal in favor of anti-slavery principles. A storm was evidently brewing. It burst forth the same day, in the following form.

"Towards the close of the session, Mr. Winans, of Mississippi, asked leave to submit the following resolution,—which, he remarked, he was sure would be interesting to all.

"*Resolved, &c.* That a pamphlet, circulated among the members of this Conference, purporting to be, *An Address to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church; By a member of that body*, containing reports of the discussion on modern abolitionism, *palpably false*, and calculated to make an impression to the injury of the characters of some of the members engaged in the aforesaid discussion, is an outrage on the dignity of this body, and meriting unqualified reprehension.'

"The resolution was signed by Mr. Winans, above mentioned, and by Mr. Stamper, of Kentucky.

"After reading the resolution, Mr. Winans proceeded to specify instances to support the allegations embraced in it, and attempted to show the propriety of such a resolution, in a series of written remarks. He contended, that there were in the Address no less than THREE *direct, flagrant* falsehoods, besides many others, indirect or inferential. He read from the manuscript with great calmness of manner—but his remarks, in matter and in style, were in a high degree violent and inflammatory. He left no room for the possibility of unintentional error;—whatever in the pamphlet he deemed a departure from a strictly accurate statement, was stigmatised as falsehood."

When speaking of it, Mr. Scott says:

"You may well imagine, that the above resolution and speech produced, upon an already sensitive General Conference, no little excitement. Many, if not most of the members, were on their feet before Br. W. had finished reading. There was a spirit of indig-

nation ready, in all parts of the house, to burst forth upon the nameless author of the offensive production. In the midst of the storm, while the thunders were yet rolling and the lightnings flashing—and while it was literally growing dark—I arose, and avowed myself the author of the pamphlet ; and requested, as it was then late, that the resolution might be laid on the table till the next morning, that I might have an opportunity to defend myself. This request was granted. I requested a copy of the resolution, which was also granted. After the Conference adjourned, I went to Br. Winans, and requested the loan of his manuscript till the next morning, that I might be prepared to reply ; but this he peremptorily refused, assigning as the reason, that *he could not trust me with it!* I had, however, taken some notes while the brother was reading his speech. Rev. J. A. Merrill, of the New England, and Rev. C. Baker, of the Maine Conference, had done the same. And as they kindly ‘ trusted ’ me with their notes, by comparing them with my own I was enabled to reply to the principal things charged against me in Brother Winans’ speech.’

The next morning, May 25th, the resolution was expected to be called up for action.

“ At the usual hour for the opening of the Conference, many of the citizens had assembled, and the galleries were well filled, expecting that the resolution against Mr. Scott would, of course, be the first business attended to, after the ceremony of opening the meeting had been performed. However, this did not turn out to be the case. Some other matter, relating, perhaps, to the mode of payment, or to the measure of the compensation of the ministers, was taken up. After this had been discussed some time, and to all appearance was about occupying the whole forenoon, Mr. Scott moved that the business then before the house be postponed, in order to take up the resolution against himself. The motion failed. A short time afterward Mr. Early renewed the motion made by Mr. Scott. Mr. Scott earnestly appealed to his brethren to sustain the motion, remarking that, although Mr. Ostrander (a gentleman who had manifested a disposition to exclude all further consideration of the resolution,) seemed determined that the resolution should not again be taken up at all, he (Mr. S.) thought it due to his character, that it should be called up immediately. He felt that it had already been postponed too long. He was keenly sensible of the injury under which he was suffering, and every moment of unnecessary delay only added to its aggravation. Mr. Early’s motion was lost. It was now about 11 o’clock in the morning—the

regular time for adjournment being half past 12. A motion was then made by a member, and carried—that, when the Conference adjourn, it adjourn to meet again at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. A large majority of the spectators, supposing from the course things had taken, that the *resolution* would not be taken up till the afternoon, retired from the house. However, not long after the galleries were thinned, and before the business under consideration was entirely disposed of, Mr. Early having renewed his motion, the resolution was called up. This was one hour, as stated by Mr. Early, before the usual period of adjournment.

" The resolution being read, Mr. Scott commenced by saying, that this day, one of the strangest spectacles was presented, which had ever been witnessed in the history of the Church. A member of the highest assembly recognized in the Church, was now arraigned before it, charged with glaring, palpable falsehood, and this not once, but many times over. Under such circumstances, it could not be expected that he should appear without emotion, yet he trusted he experienced a good degree of calmness. It was the first time in his life he had been charged with falsehood. Those who knew him best, had always been willing to accord to him purity of motive. In the resolution, he was accused of uttering a deliberate falsehood, of stating as *true* what he knew to be false. This was a serious, a grave charge, and enough, if sustained, to disfranchise him of both his ministerial character and his membership. He had not only been accused of ' barefaced, glaring and palpable' falsehood—Bro. Winans had also declared, that the author of that pamphlet must either be a ' reckless incendiary or a *non compos mentis*.' If he (Mr. Scott) had set fire to the city of Cincinnati, he could hardly have been treated with more severity. What is the usual course, in cases of misrepresentation? Suppose in replying to any member, he should mis-state any of his arguments—would it be right—would it be in order, for that brother to rise in his place and charge him with falsehood? Was there then so much difference between a speech written and a speech delivered, as in the one case, where there is misrepresentation, to warrant the charge of ' barefaced, glaring and palpable falsehood,' and in the other, to call only for *correction*?

" He wished to direct the attention of the brethren to the design of the pamphlet. It would be recollect, that the arguments, adduced by him on the subject of abolitionism, had been replied to only in part, and superficially. Br's. Winans, Crowder, and others in the opposition, moreover, had not been answered by brethren on his side of the question. This suggested to his mind the idea of writing a little address, in which he could present to the view

of brethren his argument entire, and the objections and arguments of opponents, together with replies to them, prepared subsequently by himself, but not delivered on the conference floor ; and present them all *in conjecture*.

" Brother Winans had accused the author of the Address of falsehood, because of his statements on the first page, that O. Scott 'was permitted to speak but once on the question.' I meant by this, said Mr. Scott, what must be obvious to all, that according to one of the rules of order, adopted by this body, I was thus restricted. The rule is, that no member shall speak twice on the same question, until all others who may wish to speak have spoken. Now I need not tell this Conference, that had the subject been debated ten days longer, I should by this rule have been effectually prohibited from speaking a second time. For we all know, that speakers were abundant, and when the question was taken, all had not spoken who desired to be heard. It was in view of these facts, I stated, that I was permitted to speak but once ; and not with any view to convey an impression that I had been denied this privilege, by an unusual order of the Conference. Brethren know there is such a rule, and they know too how unlikely it was, that it should be set aside in my behalf. They are all aware, that on the last day of the discussion, I was called to order by a member for speaking twice, as he supposed, to the same question, when I only rose to speak to an amendment, and occupied but three minutes ;--and I was then pronounced in order, on the ground that *before* I had spoken to the main question ; *now*, I was speaking to an amendment. I might, indeed, have made my meaning less liable to be mistaken, by stating 'according to the rules of the house I had not permission ;' but as this was my sole meaning, so it never entered my mind for one moment that I should be misunderstood. Ought this omission then to subject a brother to the high and heavy charge of falsehood ? Never did such an idea enter my mind as an intention to deceive by this omission.

" Mr. Scott said that he had been charged with falsehood, in making such a statement of Brother Winans' argument, as is found on page 10 of the pamphlet."

" This is the strongest, and indeed the principal position which brother W. has taken against me. I will make a few statements, and then the Conference will be able to judge whether I have indeed, in this instance, subjected myself to the charge of palpable, bare-faced, glaring, wilful falsehood ! I intended to state brother Winans' argument as briefly as possible, and yet not so briefly as to give either a partial or false view of the sentiment of the speaker. I thought the inference that ' Slavery is right under all circumstan-

ces' a fair one from his premises—nay, more, I understood him to draw that inference in whole, or in part, from *my own premises*.—His argument when stated a little more at length, was simply this: I will attempt to show from the brother's (Mr. Scott) own premises, that slavery is right under all circumstances. He then stated, that slavery was a divine institution—God permitted the Hebrews to hold slaves, and made laws to regulate slavery. It must, therefore, be right under some circumstances—and the brother from New England has told us, that if slavery is right under *some* circumstances, it is right under *all* circumstances. I have proved that it is right under some circumstances, and therefore from the brother's own admission, it is right under all circumstances. But it may be observed in the *first* place, that I never admitted, that if slavery was right under *some* circumstances it was right under all—I never made such a statement. In the second place, I never denied that the Scriptures allowed the Jews to hold servants. I am not such a *non compos mentis* as not to know this fact. It will be seen therefore that Bro. W., in making out his conclusion, that *slavery is right under all circumstances*, attributes to me what I never said, and assumes what I never denied—so that my premises have no sort of connection with his inference—and for it he alone is responsible. I did not suppose I was doing him any injustice in stating his argument as I did—I certainly had no such *design*, and therefore will submit this explanation as an accompaniment to my original statement of his argument. And whether the inference, that slavery is right under all circumstances, belongs more properly to him or to me, to his premises or to mine, I leave for the Conference and the public to judge. Suppose I were to affirm that polygamy is right under *some* circumstances—[Here Mr. Winans interrupted the speaker, and remarked that he really believed him to be out of order. He demanded that he should be kept to the record—that he should speak directly to the charge made against him—and not be permitted to wander into irrelevant discussion. The Bishop decided Mr. Scott was in order. Mr. Winans still persisted, and others of the south sided with him.] The Bishop (Roberts) decided, that so long as Mr. Scott was respectful in his manner, he might take any course he saw proper to defend himself, but brethren might appeal. [An appeal was called for, and the motion being put, a majority voted to sustain the decision of the chair.] Mr. Scott said he did not intend to be disrespectful. He was endeavoring to explain to the Conference, how he had been led to mistake the argument of brother Winans, if he indeed had mistaken it. He was proceeding to suppose a case. Suppose I were to affirm that polygamy is right under *some* circumstances, or *no* circumstan-

ees, or *all* circumstances—I soon come to the conclusion, that it is wrong under all circumstances. But no, says brother Winans, I can prove from your own premises that polygamy is right under all circumstances. It was allowed, it is recognized, and not condemned in Jewish scriptures among the Jews, and therefore it is right, according to your premises under *all* circumstances! Who does not readily see the sophistry of such an argument!

"Bro. Winans *did* state that slavery was a divine institution—perpetual, hereditary slavery; and yet he affirmed of the representation of his argument in which this statement is made, that 'every word of it was false.' If it be false, it is unintentionally so. I took down notes of his argument at the time, and the representation accords exactly with them. I never used the premises he represented as mine. I am not surprised, sir, that brethren should be much excited when they see their arguments in print, and think them misrepresented.

"Bro. Winans stated that he declined the abstract question of slavery. Now his speech as reported in the Philanthropist, which he yesterday quoted, as confirmatory of the truth of his charge against me, makes him say, that he would meet me on the abstract question, on my own ground. I did not understand him as declining the abstract question.

"I am accused of another falsehood, because on page 13 of the pamphlet, I represent our southern brethren as saying, that 'it would not do to let the south know that we were as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery.' If brethren of the south did not say this—did not say that the proposed amendment, in the language of our Discipline, would be believed a mere cloak for secret abolitionism—if they did not say it would not do *now*—then I did hear very erroneously. [Mr. Scott did not hear erroneously. It was repeatedly asserted on the floor of the Conference, that it would not 'do to speak out now'—that 'there was a time for every thing,' &c., &c. Hundreds of spectators must have heard the same things.—Ed.]

"Brother Winans stated, that he did not remember the remarks concerning the division of the Union, attributed to me on page 6 of the pamphlet. I did not allude to this objection to the doctrines of abolition, and made also some remarks upon it. But they are carried out more fully in the pamphlet. It would have been better to have included the added remarks in brackets. But this was neglected, not, however, with the intention to deceive. [It is easy, I think, to explain this omission. Mr. Scott wrote the pamphlet, superintended its printing, corrected proof, &c., under circumstances very unfavorable to entire exactness and perspicuity.

The pamphlet was written and ready for circulation within one week, during all of which period he had numerous Conference engagements to attend to. Under such circumstances, it is not wonderful that in reporting his own speech, he should at times forget his character as a reporter, and carry out his thoughts as if they were constituent parts of the delivered speech. It is indeed a matter of surprise that many other such mistakes did not occur.—Ed.]

“I am again accused of misrepresentation, in attributing to brother Winans the remarks made on page 10, ‘about murdered wives and children,’ &c. My sole intention in these was to show, that the brother meant such would be the effect of abolitionism, if its measures were carried out. This I presume he will not deny *was* his meaning. [Mr. Winans did not deny it either then or subsequently.—Ed.] Mr. Scott made some further remarks on this charge, of which our notes are insufficient to warrant any report. In our opinion he fully acquitted himself of the charge of falsehood or intentional misrepresentation.

“Mr. Scott made a few remarks in reply to Dr. Bangs’ observations on reporters of speeches, &c. He (Mr. Scott) considered a public address public property, especially when delivered on a public subject. In regard to this, members of Conference should be governed by public usages, until a special order were taken. No requisition of silence or secrecy had been made on the members. All that could be done, where there was misrepresentation, was to disclaim it. This was a task public preachers were compelled to submit to.

“Mr. Scott occupied about an hour and a quarter in his remarks. He manifested the same calmness, self-possession and dignity—the same Christian forbearance and meekness of temper—which had characterized all his previous exhibitions in the Conference. Nothing offensive in his manner, spirit or language, could at any time be detected. In not a single instance, was he called to order by the chair or any member of the Conference, except indeed the instance already noticed. All this was wonderful—especially to a beholder—considering the greatness of his provocations, the scandalous nature of the charges preferred against him, and the unfaltering pertinacity, the unmitigated severity, which marked the language and measures of his opponents.

“We may remark, that no speaker that followed him, chose to contest with him a single point he had assumed in his justification. Perhaps we should except Mr. Winans, who stated that the ground on which he charged Orange Scott with falsehood, in particular, was, not that he did not state his argument correctly, but that he *stated directly the opposite* to what it really was.

" Mr. Winans then rose, not to make a speech, but to state a few things in explanation. He had never charged O. Scott with falsehood, in the *first, second or third* degree : he had thus charged the anonymous author of the Address. He could not have gone to O. Scott and asked an explanation ; for he did not know he was the author. Here Mr. Scott interrupted him by saying he had not suggested this course, but that Mr. Winans ought to have demanded in open Conference, who was the author, and his name would have been forthcoming. Mr. Winans remarked, that he did not think it becoming to *hunt up every skulker* who might choose to derange his speeches. If he *had* known the author of the pamphlet was Orange Scott, he would have charged him as Orange Scott. He had hoped that no member could be guilty of such an outrage. O. Scott had been hinted at by some as the author of the address, but he had met all such suggestions with a prompt negative. He really had conceived an exalted opinion of that man's intelligence and integrity ; but he was now obliged to surrender it.

" He did not, he repeated, charge O. Scott with falsehood for not stating his argument correctly ; but because he stated it directly opposite to what it was. One third of the members of the Conference had come to him and asked him, whether he would suffer such a misrepresentation to pass unnoticed ?

" An investigation of ten days, he thought, would bring them no nearer to a decision on this resolution. He professed to be opposed to any further procrastination. The Conference had heard both sides of the question. For his own part, he considered the misrepresentation contained in the pamphlet, *deliberately false statements, and made with design.* He did not deem a response to what had been said, becoming the dignity of the Conference.

" Mr. Early made a few remarks which we could not exactly apprehend. It seemed to be the wish of the most prominent of the southern members to urge the Conference to an immediate decision on the question. An adjournment was moved, for the regular period for recess had come, and was past ; a vote having been taken, by which Mr. Scott was permitted to continue his remarks fifteen minutes beyond that period. The motion to adjourn was carried—Messrs. Early, Winans, Smith, Payne, and most of the southern members voting against it.

" *Wednesday afternoon, May 25.*—After the clerk had read the resolution under consideration, Mr. Ostrander, of the New York Conference, after making a few remarks, in a tone too low to be distinctly audible, moved that the resolution be referred to a select committee. His reasons, as well as we could hear them, re-

ferred to the benefit of having it so altered as to secure more complete unanimity in passing it.

"Mr. Sandford, of the same conference, spoke also in favor of the reference. He condemned the address, not for stating what was absolutely and *palpably* false, but for so mingling truth with what was false, as to present the matter in an uncandid and dishonest light. He could not support the resolution, for it affirmed palpable falsehood.

"Remarks were made by several, indicating that the reference was unacceptable to the violent and uncompromising in the Conference. So decided was the feeling manifested, that the mover of the reference was induced to withdraw his motion. The attempt was now made, not so much to secure the passage of the resolution,—for to any observer, this appeared fully certain—as to bring about great *unanimity* in voting for it. With this view, Mr. Crowder, of the Virginia Conference, made some remarks intended to show that there was in the resolution no impeachment of the *motives* of the author—that there was nothing levelled against him *personally*—that it was the *pamphlet*, and this alone, which was now under consideration, and which it was intended to condemn.

"This view of the subject did not appear altogether to satisfy Dr. Ruter of the Pittsburg Conference. He would be pleased to see such a subject disposed of with an unanimity that all must feel was desirable. There were many who would be disposed to join in a vote of condemnation, who yet thought the resolution ought to undergo a modification; which, without undue harshness, would be sufficient to relieve those who were charged wrongfully by the author of the pamphlet, from any odium it might attach to them, and furnish at the same time, an indication sufficiently decisive, of the sentiment of the Conference in relation to the matter. Feeling thus, and thinking thus, he regretted that the motion for referring the resolution to a select committee had been withdrawn. He thought it his duty to renew it, which he now did.

"Mr. Roszell rose, apparently a good deal chafed at the dilatory progress of the proceedings, now again attempted to be further delayed by a renewal of the motion to refer. He spoke with his wonted animation in opposition to the reference. He thought, the publication of the pamphlet an offence of great enormity, an outrage of singular aggravation, and that it was properly met by the resolution, which went to condemn it in unqualified terms. And who among us, asked Mr. R., does not look upon the pamphlet in this light—who among us is not prepared to bestow on it unqualified condemnation—and who among us is not prepared to sustain a resolution which utters this condemnation in the most appropriate

terms? But, continued Mr. R., some find alleviation for the unworthy conduct of the author in the fact of his having unhesitatingly and openly avowed himself as such, before this Conference. Pretty alleviation—creditable excuse! when this was done not *before* but *after* an investigation of the matter was set on foot in this body! And will brethren urge this as a sufficient cause for sending the resolution to a committee—for consuming still more of the precious time of this Conference! Why, sir, shall we delay still longer for such a reason as this, to condemn, in terms becoming it, a gross misrepresentation, calculated to injure us? If this conduct of the author be mentioned, I would say, 'sir, that he ought in addition to an avowal of his agency in such a matter, to come forward and express his regret and his sorrow for the offence he has committed.

"Do you suppose, continued Mr. R., that the reading of this pamphlet has been confined to the members of this Conference—that they are the only persons who have handled this inflammatory and odious document? Far from it—it has been despatched abroad in large quantities—and with other incendiary materials, it has been sent off to the *west* [*east*] to be scattered throughout the community. For such conduct as this, sir, no language is too strong. It is an insult to this Conference, and it is a duty we owe to ourselves to support our own character. He concluded by saying, he hoped to answer all the arguments that might be brought forward on the other side, when the subject was put into a position, to make discussion on the merits, *proper*; and in the meantime, that the resolution would not be referred.

"Dr. Capers of South Carolina, made a few remarks in a very spirited style, in opposition to the reference. What, said he, would be the effect of such a course? Would it not justly be said that we lacked courage to meet the exigency? What other action could a committee recommend? Have we not the *truth* now *staring us in the face*? If we act not, *at once*, in conformity to its requirements, the impression must go abroad that we are wanting in courage.

"Mr. Bowen, of the Oneida Conference, objected to the resolution itself, and read a substitute for it, which he intended at a proper time to offer. He did not believe that to pass the resolution as it *was*, before the Conference, would be beneficial. Some of the brethren, whilst they thought the brother had not given as full a view of the case as the circumstances called for, yet believed that he had acted honestly. In this view, the terms employed in the resolution were not acceptable to them, and they believed, others less exceptionable might be used, which would enable the Conference

to accomplish all it ought to desire to accomplish, that is *the warding off of injury from themselves, by invalidating the pamphlet.*

" Mr. Drake, of the Mississippi Conference, opposed the reference. He thought, a committee could not act on the subject now before them, nearly so advantageously as the Conference itself. In answer to the objections, taken by some to the resolutions, as impeaching the motives of Mr. Scott—he declared he did not so interpret them, nor did he suppose they would be so interpreted by others. He did not consider the resolutions as impeaching the *motives* of the writer—the object was, the *pamphlet*. It was this which was doing the mischief, and it was this which, at a distance, would be set down *as true*:—To prevent this, it is the duty of the Conference to say, *it is not true*. The *pamphlet* it was, that would serve to increase the number of abolitionists—it was the influence of it, and not the character of the author, that the mover of the resolutions, doubtless, had in view in introducing it in the Conference.

" [It was a saying of Lysander, the tyrant of Athens, that *when the lion's skin proved too short, he eked it out with the fox's tail.* The southern gentlemen—part of them at least—seem somewhat inclined to practise the same device. And yet the attempt in this instance, was one of astonishing boldness and effrontery. To say in one breath, of a man, that he has told a ‘*palpable falsehood*’—and in the next, to argue with his friends who are to be persuaded, by this means, that his *motives* are not brought in question, is indeed adding insult to injury. The attempt at such a fraudulent imposition on the one hand, and the stupidity which could be imposed on by it on the other, is no small proof of the disqualifications of both parties for the ministry. Men who can *use*, and men who can *believe*, such an argument, are but badly qualified to contend in God’s magnificent and awful cause.]

" Mr. Early, of the Virginia Conference, commenced his remarks by expressing his sorrow that a motion to refer had been made. He had often remarked it, that when a whole deliberative assembly was just ready for decided action, an officious proposition was offered, as in the present case, to divert it from its course. But if it be true, that brethren are not prepared for a frank and ready decision, let the resolution lie on the table. But has it come to this, that we have met here, some of us travelling a thousand miles and more, others suffering privation in leaving our homes and our families unprotected from danger, it may be, during our absence—and have no power even to protect our own members and this body from insult—from aggravated and false statements? Will any one say, that the guilty ought not to be censured even? Sir, have we no *energy*? But if the majority of the Conference have no en-

ergy—not enough of it to protect their own honor from insult and degradation—be it known that there are in the Conference those who *have*, and *who ought to be by themselves*. You have refused once to refer ; if you refer it now, what will be the effect ?

" Why, sir, you have but the other day denounced abolitionism—and yet do you talk of referring such a writing as this pamphlet ? To what does all this protracted debate amount ? Is it not plain, that it tends rather to increase sympathy for the author of the injury, than to do justice to ourselves ? And shall we be accessory to such a result as this in the case of the author of the address—of one who is guilty of bringing into this body a pamphlet of an incendiary character—or of him who is acting concurrently with the vilest miscreant here, (the editor of an incendiary paper in this city, who, violating the laws of the state where he lived, is compelled to seek a refuge out of its limits,) and who has been twice tried and sentenced to three months hard labor in the house of correction by the laws of his own state ? And shall it be said, under these circumstances, that this Conference has no power of correction—no power to pass censure ! It is full time for you, sir, to speak *out*—to testify that you have some respect for yourselves—to say that you have some regard for your *honor*. Ask the oldest member of this body, if he ever witnessed the disturbance of a Conference, by a member, after this manner—if ever such a case occurred before ?—Submit to this, sir ! If we submit to this, we are prepared to submit to anything.

" [Although a considerable number of the spectators were in some measure prepared for such an exhibition as that of Mr. Early, by prelibations of his temper, in the former debates of the Conference on the subject of abolition—yet the rudeness of his language, and the ferocity of his manner, both in better harmony with the calling of his *overseer*, than that of a minister of Jesus Christ, produced an evident shock on the majority of those present. It furnished ocular demonstration of the odious supremacy which the spirit of oppression acquires, by long and uncontrolled domination, over the spirit of love ; and gave, so far as one instance could, decisive evidence of the irreconcilableness of the religion of the Gospel with the Slavery of the South.]

" The persons supposed to be alluded to, by Mr. E. towards the conclusion of his speech, were Mr. Scott and Mr. Storrs, both members of the Conference, and the editor of the Philanthropist, who was in the gallery as a spectator ; and who, by the rules of the house, was not permitted to make any reply to this assault on his feelings and character—made in the presence of hundreds of spectators, and unprecedented, so far as is known, in any professedly religious assembly, that has ever been convened in this country.]

"When Mr. Early had ended his remarks, a gentleman whose name we are not enabled to ascertain, moved to lay on the table the *motion to refer*, then under consideration. This was carried by a large majority.

"The original resolution was again read.

"It now seemed that the Conference were ready to proceed to a final vote. Mr. Scott rose and moved, that *his* name be inserted in the resolution instead of the word *member*—so that *who* was intended might be fully known.

"Dr. Bangs moved to lay this motion on the table. It was accordingly laid on the table.

"At this stage of the proceedings, Mr. Ruter asked permission to be excused from voting on the resolution. According to our recollection, he was excused. Some intimation was given that others would desire the same favor. Mr. M'Ferrin of the Tennessee Conference, remarked, with some degree of petulance, that it was not against the rule for members to *retire* from the room—that in this way they might avoid voting.

"The vote was then taken on the original resolution, which was passed by NINETY-SEVEN in the affirmative, to NINETEEN in the negative. Many, it is supposed, did not vote, as the whole number in the Conference was more than one hundred and fifty, and but few had left for home.

"Mr. Storrs now moved, that he and others who had voted in the negative, should be permitted to have their names entered on the Journal of the Conference, as voting against the resolution. The debate which was about rising on this motion, was soon quelled by another, to lay it on the table. This succeeded by a large majority."

The abolitionists, who were few in number, were not, however, wanting in ability or spirit. They did not tamely submit to the injustice done them, and by silence acknowledge they deserved it. Immediately after the condemnation of abolitionism, in connection with the attendance of two members of the General Conference at an anti-slavery meeting, there was prepared a protest. But being refused the right of recording their names as voting against Mr. Winans' resolution, they were prevented from entering it on the records.

The adjournment of the General Conference, and the speedy gathering of various annual conferences, afforded ample scope for developments of a pro-slavery character, which will be noted hereafter.

CHAPTER IX.

PRO-SLAVERY ITEMS—STORES LOCATED—MEMORIAL TO WESLEYANS IN ENGLAND—SCOTT'S MOVEMENTS—T. MERRITT'S WRITINGS—LYNN CONVENTION—CONFERENCE RIGHTS—CONVENTION OF LAYMEN—THEIR CORRESPONDENCE WITH BISHOP WAUGH.

THE doings of the General Conference of 1836, furnish abundant evidence of a desire and a design to crush abolitionism. The success of the efforts to secure that result, was, however, very far from being equal to the expectations of many. Indeed, the immediate influence of the measures adopted to overthrow it, was favorable to its extensive and permanent success. That such means should be made use of, by a dignified assembly of Christian ministers, startled thousands from thoughtless indifference to earnest inquiry and active exertion. Let us review, for a moment, the acts of that body. What had it done?

It refused to order published the Address of the Wesleyan Conference, which contained a declaration "that great scriptural principles are opposed to the continuance of slavery."

It refused to condemn slavery, in the reply made to that Address.

It reported against any further legislation on slavery, although petitions in favor of it were signed by thousands, and presented.

It did decidedly "condemn modern abolitionism," by a vote of 123 to 15, and refused to say, "we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery."

It did wholly disclaim any right, wish or intention, to interfere with slavery, as it exists in this country, by the same vote.

It did condemn, "unqualifiedly," "two members of the General Conference," for speaking at an anti-slavery meeting.

It condemned as "palpable falsehoods" the mistakes of a member, in speaking of the arguments used in debates on the subject of slavery.

It advised "both ministers and people" "wholly to refrain from this agitating subject."

The actual results of these proceedings will be developed by the narrative which we are about to relate, of the movements in the Church, favorable to abolitionism, subsequent to this General Conference action.

At the first session of the New Hampshire Conference, to which these "two members of the General Conference" belonged, who were censured, a vote was passed, approbating the course their delegates had pursued at the General Conference. Prompted by Christian independence and sympathy for the slave's cause, George Storrs withdrew from the travelling ministry, by asking a location. This, in the Methodist ministry, is merely taking the control of a man's locomotion, thought, and speech, from the Bishop; and assuming to act for himself, in the disposal of his time and talents.

From this time, the summer of 1836, this devoted friend of the slave occupied himself for years exclusively in efforts to advance the anti-slavery enterprise. For a long time he was employed as an agent of the American Anti-Slavery Society, and subsequently was publisher of Zion's Watchman.

Early in the month of August, the same year, a memorial on slavery was prepared and sent over to the Wesleyan Conference in England, signed by eighty-nine anti-slavery ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The action of the General Conference prompted this movement. It commenced with saying:

"VENERABLE FATHERS AND BRETHREN,—

"The undersigned, members of the Maine, New Hampshire, Oneida, New England, Genessee, Black River, and New York Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the United States of America, respectfully beg leave to address you upon the subject of American slavery. We are emboldened to do so, from a consideration of the Christian joy which you were pleased to express in your last Address, (presented by your excellent Representative, the Rev. W. LORD, to our General Conference at its last sitting in May last,) that the Methodist Connection in this country had 'already began to *resist* and condemn this baneful system;' and especially as our General Conference refused to publish the Address of our British brethren, by which our people might obtain a knowledge of the fraternal solicitude which is felt by them for us, in relation to this subject, we think it proper to take this method

for giving you information of a few facts, which we trust will show our Fathers and Brethren in England, how much the professed followers of Wesley in this country need their prayers and Christian admonitions.

"In our different annual conferences, as you are aware, probably, we have now about three thousand travelling ministers, and out of this number we are not aware there are three hundred, who are abolitionists, who believe that holding and treating the human species as *property* is a *sin* against God, which ought to be immediately abandoned.

"In our views of this great evil, we do not differ from Wesley, Clarke, Watson, Coke, and the sentiments which have been put forth from your venerable body. But there are a few facts in relation to the system as it exists in this country, and especially as it is countenanced and defended in the Methodist Episcopal Church, with which we wish our brethren on the other side of the Atlantic to be acquainted."

It then speaks of—1. The number enslaved. 2. The slave-trade. 3. The moral condition of the enslaved. 4. The course taken by the Methodist Church of this country in relation to this subject. 5. The present state of the Methodist E. Church—its connection with the slave system. 6. The political bearing of this subject; and 7. The influence which may be successfully exerted against this system from abroad.

At the Wesleyan Conference to which this was directed, Dr. Fisk was present, as the delegate from the Methodist Episcopal Church. The document was not read in open conference, because "they said it was not for them officially to encourage representations from individuals and portions of conferences, when they had an official interchange and correspondence with the entire body."—(See *Dr. Fisk's letter, No. 541 Advocate & Journal.*)

"I think I may add," says Dr. Fisk, "that the English generally perceive the impropriety of direct interference with this question in America." That he was mistaken, however, is evident from this consideration. Although the reply to their first Address, which Dr. Fisk read in the conference, in no way responded to their strong views against slavery, but complained of their want of proper sympathy for the American Methodists;—yet, their answer to that reply re-affirmed their detestation of slavery, in still

stronger terms. For proof, the reader is referred to the fourth chapter of this work, where it is inserted. Although the memorial of the eighty-nine was not publicly read, it was without question examined by very many in private, who learned therefrom what was much needed to give them a correct view of the question of slavery. Moreover, Mr. William Lord was also present, having returned from America, where he had represented the Wesleyan Conference. What his personal feelings were toward the abolitionists, and what the probable influence exerted by him upon the preachers, may be gathered from the following extract of a letter from him, published in the *Christian Guardian of Canada*, dated,

“ BRISTOL, (Eng.) Feb. 20, 1837.

“ I was greatly delighted with the sober, but very decided letter of Mr. Merritt to Dr. Bangs. I think he has taken the right course, and the time will soon arrive when others will wish they had taken the same course. It is impossible that the question of emancipation can remain stationary in a free country. Now that it is mooted, slavery must be destroyed, or it will destroy the free institutions of the country. At the General Conference, the abolitionists were in a very small minority; before another, the case will be greatly altered. There I envied the position in which brother O. Scott stood, making a firm stand against the monstrous evil, opposed by an overwhelming and influential majority, many of whom are haters of slavery, but had not the moral courage to contend with public opinion, or sincerely believed the abolition measures tend to the destruction of their country. But as in our country, so in America, the storm will soon blow over, and the question of emancipation will become popular.”

Having again introduced to notice the name of Orange Scott, it may be well to present at once, a view of his movements in furtherance of the anti-slavery enterprise, after the General Conference. He was removed from his place as presiding elder, in July of 1836, and stationed in Lowell, Mass., by Bishop Hedd^{ing}. The main cause of this removal was believed to be that he would not desist from writing and speaking on the “ agitating subject.” During this year, Mr. Scott’s labors were attended with abundant success, in the conversion of sinners, and the upbuilding of the church. Showing how perfectly consistent it was to asso-

ciate vigorous efforts for the overthrow of slavery, with the peculiar work and labor of the Christian ministry. The following gives an account of this success, in connection with Br. Parker, his colleague. It was written, Nov. 11th, at Lowell.

Speaking of his labors in Lowell, in 1836, he says :

" In the station I now occupy there has been a continuous revival for more than three years, and more than 600 souls professed conversion during that time. All the preachers engaged herein were thorough-going abolitionists ! "

Of his own movements there, in connection with his colleague, he says :

" We first aimed at securing an outpouring of the Holy Spirit and salvation among the people. We did not labor long before seeing a general manifestation of his grace. Multitudes crowded to the house of prayer. The body of the church and the vestry too were filled. On one occasion 75 were forward for prayers in the church, and 50 in the vestry above, on the same evening. More than 150 professed conversion—100 joined the M. E. Church.

" During this revival we preached and prayed for the slave, and such was the state of feeling in the church and congregation, that they were prepared with entire unanimity for the adoption of almost any abolition measure. I lectured publicly with the approbation of the church and congregation, although at the commencement of the year they were not one-tenth abolitionists."

In addition to the discharge of his pastoral duties, he was found often, during the year, at a distance from home, lecturing on slavery, and attending public conventions in several of the States. His presence and counsel was secured, at the formation of the Pennsylvania State Anti-Slavery Society, at Harrisburg, Jan. 31, 1837. An extensive correspondence with the public, through the periodical press, was a further evidence of a lively interest in the various questions agitating the public mind, and showed a mind and heart capable of long continued and powerful effort. The pernicious results of abolitionism in discouraging revivals of religion, had been dwelt upon at length in the public papers, by various ministers of distinction in the Methodist Church. Justice to the cause of truth and righteousness, requires the insertion of a letter from him, touching that matter. It will be found to contain a correct and

comprehensive view of the cause of declension in the Church, and an able refutation of the charge above noted.

From Zion's Watchman.

DECREASE OF MEMBERS IN THE M. E. CHURCH.

MR. EDITOR:—Much has been said during the past year, respecting the decrease of members in our church; and still the evil exists. The minutes of the several annual conferences for 1836, just received, show a decrease in the Methodist Episcopal Church of 1857 members for the last year; and year before last, there was a much larger decrease. Thus, for the last two years the M. E. Church, with her 650,000 church members, and her 2,900 travelling preachers, has been going astern! How is this? We live in an age and land of revivals; and the doctrines of Methodism are carrying increasing convictions to the hearts and consciences of millions of our fellow-citizens, that they are of God. And yet our church is on the retrograde march, and has been for more than two years! Some sections of it have been favored, but this is not the case with the great whole. A curse and a mildew seem to rest upon us; and I am of the opinion, that the true cause of our barrenness has not yet been told. It appears to me that our speculations upon this subject have amounted to but little. We have gone round and round the principal cause, while we have enlarged upon small matters and secondary things. But I am determined to bring out boldly what I believe to be the “wedge of gold and the Babylonish garment,” or the “iniquity which is found in us.”

There are Achans among us, a thousand times worse than Achan of old. He robbed God in temporal things; we have robbed him of his own image! We have stolen not merely a wedge of gold, a Babylonish garment, and a few hundred shekels of silver, but we have stolen human beings, and have made merchandize of immortal spirits! And even in the North, we have apologized for this iniquity—we have connived at it—we have attempted to cover it up with the Word of God! In most of the annual conferences, and in the General Conference assembled, we have arraigned and condemned the *innocent*. We love our iniquities and the gains of unrighteousness too well to bear the reproofs and exposures of the Nathans whom God has raised up! The highest ecclesiastical tribunal of the Methodist Episcopal Church has solemnly condemned the course of all her ministers and members who dare to plead the cause of the oppressed, while it was refused to breathe a syllable against those who oppress and rob God's intelligent creatures of their all! I am not surprised that God has suffered destruction to

come upon our Book Concern, or that a blasting mildew rests upon many parts of our work. I doubt not that there are heavier thunderbolts in reserve for us, if we repent not. Our glory, it is to be feared, is fast departing and dying away. It appears that the language of the prophet Ezekiel to ancient Tyre, is as applicable to us as it was to her.

"Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth—and I have set thee so; that thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire."

"Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day thou wast created, till *iniquity* was found in thee."

"By the multitude of thy merchandize they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and *thou hast sinned*. Therefore I will cast thee out as profane out of the mountain of God; and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire."

"Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy TRAFFIC; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall *devour thee*, and I will bring thee to *ashes* upon the earth, in the sight of all of them that behold thee."—Ezekiel xxviii. ; 14, 15, 16, 18.

The Methodist Church has stood forth in prosperity, as the anointed cherub that covereth. She "has dwelt upon the holy mountain of God," and she "has walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire!" She was "perfection in her ways" from the day that she was created, "till iniquity was found in her!" But she has made "merchandise" of the souls of men, and "violence" is in the midst of her; and she "has sinned." She has "defiled" her "sanctuaries" by the iniquity of her "TRAFFIC."

* * * * *

Dr. Fisk gives it as his opinion, that one cause of our decrease of members is our agitation of the subject of slavery. Similar opinions have been expressed by others. By "our agitation" is meant, I suppose, abolitionism. If it were affirmed that an opposition to abolitionism has been a curse to the Methodist Episcopal Church, the assertion would be supported by too many facts to admit of successful contradiction. But when it is intimated that an opposition to slavery has produced a decrease of members, stubborn facts are contradicted.

The New England and New Hampshire Conferences have been the *hot beds* of abolition; and in both these conferences there has been, during the last two years, a nett gain of 2241 members! And this, too, in that part of the country where the *hottest anti-slavery battles have been fought*. Where presiding elders and preachers have lectured upon slavery, attended anti-slavery meetings, and

spoken out in tones of thunder from the pulpit and through the press against *ordained robbery*, and *Christian manslaughter*, our gain for the last two years has been about six per cent. Had the gain in all our pro-slavery conferences been equal to ours, in the stead of losing several thousands, we should have gained about 80,000 members! The nett gain in the New Hampshire Conference has been, for the last two years, a little less than two per cent., or about 38 members. The Maine Conference has lost 928—the Philadelphia Conference 1347—and the Baltimore Conference 2255! All these Conferences have passed anti-abolition resolutions, and have strongly opposed the discussion of the slave question! This speaks volumes! Put THIS and THAT together. Dr. Fisk and others *vs.* facts. Anti-abolition *alias* pro-slavery measures *vs.* revivals! In the station I now occupy, there has been a perpetual revival for more than three years, and not less, probably, than 600 or 800 souls have been converted to God in those revivals! And yet all the preachers who have been employed in this station during this period, have been thorough-going abolitionists!! Add to this, George Thompson, the *fanatic*, and many other abolition *incendiaries*, have lectured here frequently during the last three years, and 1500 or more have been added to the anti-slavery societies in this place!! This is the way anti-slavery movements destroy revivals! In many other parts of our conference, abolitionism and discussion have had nearly as ruinous an effect upon the cause of God!

It is not pretended that revivals of religion are confined to abolitionists; but it does appear from facts, that to say the least, abolitionism is not an “unhallowed flame,” or abolitionists poor fallen backsliders. I think it may be safely said, that three-fourths of all the revivals within the bounds of this conference, during the last year, were brought about through the instrumentality of abolitionists. Many of our brethren, however, who differ from us in sentiment, on the great question, have been blessed and favored of the Lord; and in this I rejoice.

There has been a decrease in most of the slaveholding conferences for two years past—though in two or three of them there has been an increase, and in one or two considerable increase. And yet, take the whole of our slaveholding conferences together, we number about 2500 less than we did two years ago. Pittsburgh, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois Conferences have been among the favored. In Oneida and Genesee, there has been a large falling off. Out of 22 annual conferences, 12 have fewer members now than they had two years ago! These are mostly slaveholding conferences, and such as have taken decided measures against the abolitionists! I am not aware, however, that the Oneida and Genesee Cou-

ferences have arranged themselves on the side of oppressors, or in other words, against immediate emancipation, though they have sustained a loss. However true it may be, that there has been an increase in some of the slaveholding conferences, yet it is also true, that the principal part of our deficiency for two years past, has been in those conferences, and in such as have violently opposed the doctrines and measures of the abolitionists; while there has been a gain in both of our abolition conferences, and in one of them a large gain. ~~FACTS~~ FACTS ARE STUBBORN THINGS. O. SCOTT.

Lowell, Nov. 25, 1836.

At the annual conference for 1837, Mr. Scott declined taking an appointment for that year, and occupied his time travelling at large and lecturing on slavery, as often as impaired health would allow. He attended the annual sessions of the Maine, New Hampshire, Erie, Oneida, and Genesee Conferences, and lectured in numerous intermediate places, to large and attentive audiences. Several of these conferences formed anti-slavery societies. The reception given him was generally cordial; but, in some instances, he was wounded "in the house of his friends." At the Oneida Conference, which begun Aug. 30, 1837, at Courtlandville, N. Y., Bishop Hedding delivered his Address on Slavery. When he concluded, George Peck, D. D., now editor of the Methodist Quarterly Review, rose and offered two resolutions, condemning O. Scott by name, as guilty of insulting the conference, or to that effect, by commencing a course of lectures on slavery in the place. The Bishop had declared he would not tender to Mr. Scott the usual introduction to the conference. But now he interrupted Mr. Peck, stating that he had not designed to introduce Br. Scott, because he might be understood as approving of his course, which he deemed disorderly and irregular. But now he would do it, as he might wish to speak to this resolution. How equivocal the compliment which this conferred. Introduced as a "disorderly and irregular" person!

When the mover had finished his speech, Schuyler Hoes very shrewdly inquired of the Bishop if these resolutions came within the items of business laid down in the Discipline. The Bishop said they were not proper conference business, but he had told Br. Scott that he considered his conduct disorderly and irregular, and there-

fore he would put the resolutions to vote. They were, however, withdrawn. An opportunity had been offered for publicly attacking O. Scott, and that sufficed. But anti-slavery principles took deep root in the Methodist churches, and spread far and wide, in the face of all opposition.

Among the adherents to the cause, many of whom came into the ranks during this period, and afterwards rendered great service, there was one whom all revered and loved—the venerable Timothy Merritt, of the New England Conference. From 1832 to 1836 he was editor of the Christian Advocate and Journal. For want of correct information respecting the designs of the abolitionists, he had for some time stood aloof from them, and disapproved their doings. The first indication of a different feeling, was given in a letter to Dr. Bangs, which was alluded to by Mr. Lord, in an extract to be found in the former part of this chapter. He condemns slavery; admits that abolitionists may be imprudent, but contends for co-operating with them in their design to overthrow slavery, and plainly intimates that such shall be his course. This letter was read with interest and satisfaction by many; but by others with surprise and alarm. Dr. Fisk replied to it, and pressed upon Br. Merritt's attention what he called "the principles of the ultra abolitionists," quoting in opposition thereto, the argument of the Counter Appeal, which he declared "no sophistry has been able to evade." This was ably answered by Br. Merritt, who defended abolitionism, and triumphantly refuted the arguments of the Counter Appeal, and showed how inconsistent good men were who opposed the abolitionists. The Doctor replied to this, in an effort to justify his position, and repel the arguments of his opponent, expressing a determination at the close, to withdraw from the discussion. A candid review of the discussion justifies the conclusion that Dr. Fisk was completely foiled in the argument. An analysis of the discussion is thus presented by Zion's Watchman, in an editorial :

"Dr. Fisk's reply to the Rev. T. Merritt, which will be found in our present number, we hope will receive the impartial attention of all our readers. On the following points, it will be seen the Dr. makes no reply to brother Merritt at all :

1. The question at issue between the abolitionists and their opponents. Brother Merritt quoted from the "Appeal" and "Defence," and also, from Dr. Fisk himself, to show, that he had misstated this question. But the Dr. makes no retraction nor correction of any kind. This is more remarkable, because it is not the first time that Dr. Fisk has given his brethren from whom he differs, just cause of complaint against him, for misstating and evading the question at issue, between him and them.

2. Brother Merritt drew an argument against slavery, from the well known meaning of two Greek words, and the language employed by the apostles, but the Dr. gives this argument the go-by.

3. Another argument was drawn from the fact that the New Testament does condemn, expressly, every part and particle of which slavery is composed. No notice is taken of this argument by the Doctor.

4. Brother Merritt particularly requested Dr. F. to say what that kind of slavery is, which "frees the slaveholder from guilt." To this the Dr. makes no reply.

5. Brother Merritt complained of the Dr. for misrepresenting his views of the measures of the abolitionists. The Dr. makes no explanation, no retraction.

6. Brother Merritt quoted the language of Dr. Fisk, in which he declared before the Wesleyan Conference, that he believed "slavery was evil, only evil, and that continually;" and he requested the Dr. to "name one thing" which he, or the other Methodists, who opposed the abolitionists, were doing to remove this evil. To this request no answer is given.

7. Brother Merritt pressed an argument, *ad hominem*, against the Dr.'s opposition to the anti-slavery cause, based on his course in relation to the subject of temperance. The Dr. makes no reply.

8. Dr. Fisk tried hard, in his first letter, to make it appear, that the Rev. Mr. Merritt was really no more of an abolitionist than himself. Brother Merritt replies to this, and shows, in five distinct particulars, wherein he agrees with the abolitionists, and requests brother Fisk to state how far he agrees with him in those particulars. On these points Dr. Fisk makes no reply.

9. Brother Merritt made a very *special request*, that Dr. Fisk should give his opinion as to what kind of an "*evil*" he believed slavery to be, whether a *moral* or a *political* evil. And this request, also, is passed over in total silence.

We regret these and similar omissions on the part of Dr. Fisk, the more because we know that great anticipations have been raised through the country, to have those points fairly and thoroughly investigated by himself and the Rev. Mr. Merritt, into whose hands

the controversy had so happily fallen. These brethren, it is well known, have long had the confidence of our entire community, and it was believed that they were fully competent to do the subject ample justice ; and hence, we believe, thousands on both sides of the question will be disappointed, on learning that Dr. Fisk winds up a discussion, *which he himself began*, by writing two letters only, and after *omitting* some points as important as those we have noticed above."

A few weeks after this, Mr. Merritt published an address to the members of the M. E. Church, that was instrumental of great good in the cause of anti-slavery. Prof. Wheden, by Dr. Fisk's request, resumed the controversy, and addressed a labored argument to Br. Merritt, on the meaning of certain texts. This was, no doubt, deemed by its author an irrefutable argument, and it was an able effort. But it was replied to, at Bro. Merritt's request, by Frederick P. Tracy, a junior preacher in the New Eng' and Conference, and completely exploded. No reply to this was ever attempted.

The writings of individuals have been thus particularly noted, because by this means alone, were they able to give utterance to their anti-slavery opinions. And individual efforts in writing and speaking were, for a long time, the sole instrumentality used. By reference to the third chapter, it will be found that the annual conferences were not allowed to act on this question against slavery, up to the present time. The importance of mutual consultation and concentrated action were very generally acknowledged among the abolitionists. This gave rise to Methodist Anti-Slavery Conventions. The first in New England was held Oct. 25, 1837, at Lynn, Massachusetts. Its design was set forth in a "Call," which was signed by about seven hundred male members and ministers, from within the bounds of four different conferences.

The Convention was organized by appointing the following officers :—*President*, Hon. Seth Sprague, Duxbury, Mass. *Vice-Presidents*, Rev. Jos. A. Merrill, Wilbraham, Mass., Rev. Timothy Merritt, Lynn, Rev. Jared Perkins, Portsmouth, N. H., and Solomon Weeks, Esq., Marlborough, Mass. *Secretaries*, Rev. La Roy Sunderland, New York, Rev. D. I. Robinson, Northfield, N. H., Rev. James Porter, Worcester, Mass., Rev. F. P. Tracy, Newbury, Mass.

The Convention issued a declaration of sentiments, embracing their views of slavery--the responsibility of the church --and the measures to be adopted for the overthrow of slavery. An elaborate and ably written report was also issued, prepared by Jotham Horton; and a series of resolutions, expressive of their feelings and determinations, were unanimously adopted, and published.

It will have been observed, that in the progress of the anti-slavery movement in the church, an unexpected difficulty obstructed its course. After the annual conferences were prepared, by a conviction of duty, to condemn slavery, they were prevented by the Bishops, who assumed it to be their prerogative to decide what business should be done in the conferences that was not expressly named in the Discipline. The right to adopt resolutions on moral subjects was not thus specified, and they forbid it unless the resolutions were, in their opinion, correct and proper. This subject was matter of much discussion. It claimed a share of attention at the convention just named, and for a long time the discussion of "Conference Rights" occupied many able pens. A sketch of it is necessary to a full view of the subject of this history. A committee on this subject was appointed at the Lynn Convention. The venerable Timothy Merritt was chairman. The following are extracts from the report :

"The committee to whom was referred the subject of Conference rights, beg leave to report :

That they exceedingly regret the necessity which has imposed upon this Convention the duty of expressing an opinion upon a subject involving, as this does, the official conduct of some among us, for whom we entertain sentiments of the most profound respect and esteem. In expressing this opinion, however, we beg it may be distinctly understood and remembered, that we are but performing a solemn duty, which, we believe, has been imposed upon us, by the course which has been taken by some of the superintendents of the Methodist E. Church—a course which has denied to annual conferences what they believe to have been their just rights. So far, therefore, as we believe any of our conferences have been unjustly deprived of certain rights, it would seem but proper, in view of what has been said and done on the other side of this question, that an opinion should be expressed by this Convention on this

subject. It has been affirmed by some of our bishops, that annual conferences have no *rights* but such as are specified in the Discipline, and of some of these it would seem that our Bishops claim to be the sole judges, at least in the intervals of the General Conferences.

Rights claimed by the Conferences.

If we understand this subject, the rights claimed by some of our annual conferences, and of which they think they have been unjustly deprived, are such as involve *moral obligations*—obligations imposed upon them by what our Discipline pronounces a “great evil;” and an evil which exists in the Church of which we are members. The critics of suffering humanity, and of those, rushing for lack of knowledge, urge us on to the performance of those duties, which some of our presidents have prohibited.

But in approaching this subject we protest against the supposition that this defence of conference rights, rights which are common to all Protestant ecclesiastical bodies, does in any way conflict with the *proper duties imposed by the Discipline upon our Church officers*. We have no controversy with Episcopacy, *as such*. Our object is simply to maintain our own rights as Christians, and Christian ministers, in the proper discharge of our duties to God, and our fellow men.

Ground assumed by the Bishops.

The ground assumed by two of our bishops is, that they are *not obliged* to put any question to the vote, in an annual conference, except such as is specified in the Discipline; and that an annual conference is *not obliged* to do any other business. It is admitted, that an annual conference cannot *force* its president to put *any* question to the vote, whether specified in the Discipline or not, neither can the president *force* the conference to do *any* business, more or less. But it appears to your committee that both the nature and fitness of things, requires annual conferences to do all the business, which, in their judgment, the interests of the Church demand; provided they do not conflict with the provisions of the charter. The Conference, we think, should be the judge, (providing it keeps within the provisions of the charter) as to *what business* the interests of the Church require to be done. A whole conference may err; but will it be as likely to err as one man? Is it safe for one hundred to give up their solemn judgment to one? And above all, ought the one to require this of the many? If the many do this *once*, may they not be called upon to do it *again*? and if they do it on *one subject*, may they not be required to do it on *others*? If annual conferences are under moral obligations

to exert their influence to promote what they solemnly believe to be the best interests of the Church, then it follows, as a matter of course, that no man has a right to prevent their doing this.

Absurdities.

To suppose that one man can be under a moral obligation to prevent a hundred others from performing what they conscientiously believe to be a Christian duty, is absurd. And to suppose the conscience of a president is the standard by which the consciences of the whole body are to be tested, is equally absurd. The president has a conscience as well as the members; and if he cannot conscientiously perform the duties of the chair, he can resign his office. But while he fills the chair, has he any right to make his conscientious scruples a pretext for laying heavy burdens on the consciences of hundreds of ministers and thousands of Church members? The Conference does *what it does*, on moral subjects, *under a sense of moral obligation*. The president puts these matters to the vote, not because HE believes the measure *judicious* or *injudicious*, but because HE IS PRESIDENT. He has not been appointed to that office to do certain things, and nothing else; but to put to the vote any business the Conference may wish to act upon, providing it keep within the provisions of the constitution. And if it be *contrary* to the Discipline to express an opinion on the evils of slavery, let it be shown. If, therefore, an annual conference feels itself religiously bound to oppose any sin, and especially such sins as the Discipline acknowledges to be moral evils, the president can have no right to prevent such expression of opinion; and to do so, is to establish a principle dangerous as a *precedent*, and oppressive in its *nature* and *tendency*.

Disciplinary authority for Conference action.

As to the authority for conference action on the subject of slavery, we would remark,

In the first place, there is nothing in the *Discipline which forbids* expressing in conference capacity an opinion on the evils of slavery. And the plainest principles of Christianity show, that *in the very nature of things*, a body of Christian ministers must have a right, in their associated capacity, to express an opinion on what they believe to be a moral question. And no human tribunal can possibly deprive them of these rights of conscience and opinion. Secondly, The Discipline not only provides, "that every person" "on these occasions," [at the conferences] may "speak freely whatever is in his heart," but expressly declares, "that we are as much as ever convinced of the *great evil of slavery*; and "the

buying of men, women, and children, with an *intention* to enslave them," is as strongly prohibited in the Discipline, as drunkenness and fighting. To pretend, therefore, that the Discipline of the Methodist E. Church gives no authority to a company of Methodist preachers, in conference assembled, to oppose what it opposes, [i. e. slavery,] is absurd!

Proper Conference Business.

The bishop is *de Conference*, but merely the *president*. As *president*, he has right to refuse to do the proper duties of the chair; and the proper duties of the chair extend to all proper conference business; and *all business, which is not contrary to the Discipline, and which is in accordance with the genius of Methodism, is proper conference business*. Bishop Hedding has defined proper conference business to be, "such business as is specified in the Discipline, either by express provision, implication, or inference;" and in such matters, he said, he was *under obligation* to put all questions to the vote. Then he is under obligation to put anti-slavery resolutions to the vote. How is it possible for the Methodist Discipline to oppose slavery as strongly as it does, and give no "*inferential*" or "*implied*" authority to a conference of Methodist preachers to oppose it? But suppose it does not; will it be pretended at this late period, that Christians have no right to oppose all sin without human authority, or that human authority can deprive them of *this right*! We hope not.

As Bishop Hedding is referred to by name, equity requires the insertion of an extract from his address on this subject:

"It has been said, 'It is the prerogative of the (annual) conference to decide *what* business they will do; and *when* they will do it.' But I deny it—this is assuming the rights of the General Conference, and usurping a control over the president of an annual conference, which no body of men has a right to exercise but the General Conference. And because I was unwilling to submit to this usurpation, I have been severely censured. I have been unjustly, repeatedly, and cruelly held up to public view, by certain inconsiderate writers, as one who infriaged on the '*rights*' of my brethren, merely because I did not consent to do what I was under no obligations to do—what I was bound by no law to do, and what I had never promised to do. And more than this, the acts I was called upon to do, were such as I believed it wrong for *me* to do, and this, I believe, was well understood by those who censured me. The men who have written against me, have written against the General Conference also, and thereby have clearly shown that they

disregard the authority of the Church in any department, unless it shall consent to adopt their creed, and to follow their measures. There has appeared to be a strong desire in these men to drive me into measures which they knew I believed to be wrong, and which they knew also would be likely to bring me into collision with the General Conference, as well as with some of the annual conferences.

ensures, hints of wrongs where no wrongs were, and even threats have been employed to accomplish this work of tyranny.

If an annual conference possessed such rights as these writers have supposed, it might legally censure the very General Conference who gives it existence, and do other things which would scatter our connection to the four winds. And yet, because I could not acknowledge such 'rights,' I have been indirectly accused of attempting to 'RULE' a conference. I have attempted no such thing—I have only claimed the right to rule myself in my official duties—to judge for myself, as I must answer for myself, what it is lawful and expedient for me to do; that is, what motion I may or may not properly put to vote in an annual conference. And although I could not with propriety submit a question of this sort to the dictation of a few individuals, or to the decision of an annual conference, yet, I have uniformly acknowledged my responsibility to the General Conference, whose agent I am, and to whom I am amenable for acting or not acting in all such cases. Yet, individuals have demanded of me, on the ground of 'rights,' services which the General Conference never required, and thereby have attempted to govern me.

This subject has been connected with the 'rights' of our people to send petitions to the —— annual conference. That the people have a right to petition the general or annual conference I cheerfully admit. And that an annual conference ought to attend to their petitions on all business which the Discipline requires such conference to do, I admit also, and this is all the business we have covenanted with the people to do in an annual conference. But when they petition us to do such things as are foreign to our duty, I deny their right to *require* us to spend our time and strength in doing those things. If they ask us to do a thing for them as a favor, we will cheerfully do it, if we can consistently; but if they *demand* such service as a 'right,' they must allow us to judge of our own obligations and duties.

The great subject on which this demand on our time and service is claimed, is slavery. And I have never refused to attend to it in annual conferences, so far as my time, health and obligations to the whole Church would admit. But what I have done, I have done on principles of courtesy, not on the ground of obligation, or 'right,'

for it is proper for me to do many things to oblige my friends, which neither friends nor enemies could demand of me on the ground of 'RIGHTS.' And my respected colleague, who has been represented to the public as taking to himself undue authority at the last session of the New England Conference, acted, so far as I know, on the same principle I have. He offered to put to vote a motion to appoint a committee to consider and report on petitions and memorials from the people on that subject, on such conditions as he deemed consistent with *his* obligations to the General Conference and to the whole Church. But his conditions were rejected, and the reason why he declined to proceed and act in the case, was, claims were made on the part of the friends of the cause of modern abolitionism, to which the president could not, in his judgment, constitutionally submit. For they claimed the '*right*,' as a conference to appoint a committee to consider and report on said memorials, as also the *right* to act in a conference capacity on any report from such committee."

A more extended notice of this discussion is not necessary. The single point in dispute was this: Had the Bishops power to decide what was proper conference business, without allowing an appeal from that decision to the conference? But the Discipline of the Church had not specified this as their prerogative. Hence the controversy. During the discussion the editors of the Advocate and Journal took sides with the Bishops. But the editor of the Maine Wesleyan Journal sided with the New England and New Hampshire Conferences. The presiding elders of various quarterly conferences assumed the same prerogatives, and refused to allow the conferences to condemn slavery. The result was a long continued and fearful agitation of the Church. On one district in the New England Conference, the course of the presiding elder was so offensive to the people, that they refused to support him, and petitioned for his removal. Although in advance of other facts to be noted, its connection with the subject under consideration will justify an introduction of it here in detail. In August, 1839, the following call was issued in Zion's Watchman, and Zion's Herald. Before the convention was held, between four and five hundred names were attached to it, embracing the most intelligent and influential of the male members of the Church on that district.

For Zion's Herald.

BRO. BROWN:—We wish you to publish the following call, with the names attached to it, in the next number of the Herald, and in the number following, the call without the names.

Joel Hayden, Williamsburgh; Thomas Musgraves, Northampton; J. J. Bassett, Springfield; S. R. B. Lewis, Westfield; D. S. Jones, Greenfield; Jasper Bement, Ashfield; D. S. Hastings, Blandford; W. B. Alden, Ludlow.

A CALL FOR A CONFERENCE OF LAYMEN.

We, the undersigned, lay members of the Methodist Episcopal Church on Springfield District, after due deliberation and consultation—are of opinion that it is a duty we owe to ourselves and the Church to which we belong, to give a united and decided expression of our opinion in relation to the oppressive course pursued by the *Presiding Elder* during the last year. And inasmuch as he has been re-appointed to the District this year—contrary to our known wishes and remonstrances—we therefore recommend that a conference of the Laity of the District be held at Williamsburgh, Mass., on *Thursday the 29th day of August, 1839*, to consult on the most judicious course to be pursued under existing circumstances."

The convention was held; Abel Bliss of Wilbraham, presided. A committee was appointed to correspond with Bishop Waugh, and request the removal of the presiding elder.

The committee, before named, wrote to the Bishop as follows:

"Springfield, August 30th, 1839.

"REV. AND DEAR SIR:—The undersigned, being a committee appointed by a convention of the laity, held at Williamsburgh, Mass., on the 29th inst., have the honor of addressing you for the purpose, as instructed, of requesting the removal of the Rev. Daniel Dorchester from his place, as presiding elder of the Springfield district; and, also, to present to your notice the following gentlemen, either of whom, in the opinion of the convention, would be acceptable and useful as president of the district. [Here follow the names.]

Be assured, dear sir, that the above request and presentation are made by those who sincerely desire the prosperity of the Methodist E. Church; and who, also, deplore the necessity of this measure, but deeming the presence of D. Dorchester worse than useless, (an opinion in which we think the Bishop would fully concur, could he but travel the district,) they can no longer witness the desolations of our beloved Zion, without another effort for the restoration of

peace, union and prosperity to this now distracted and suffering district.

Yours, in the bonds of a free and peaceful gospel,

J. J. BASSETT,
DENIS COOK."

To that he thus replied :

"Baltimore, Sept. 11th, 1839.

" Messrs. J. J. Bassett, and Denis Cook,

" DEAR BRETHREN :—I have received a communication from you, dated 30th ult., saying, that you were a committee appointed by a convention of the laity, held at Williamsburgh on the 29th, and instructed to request the removal of Rev. Daniel Dorchester from his place as presiding elder of Springfield District, and also, to name certain gentlemen of the district. You farther state, that the above request and presentation are made by those who sincerely desire the prosperity of the Methodist E. Church; who while they deplore the necessity of the measure, they (deeming the presence of D. Dorchester worse than useless,) cannot longer witness the desolation of Zion, without another effort for the restoration of peace, union and prosperity to your now distracted and suffering district; and you finally express a conviction that I would concur if I could but see your unhappy condition. This is the substance of your communication. Now, dear brethren, while I believe that Zion does, indeed, mourn on your district, and while I mourn on that account, I have no reason to believe that the causes of her desolation are to be found in either the talents, piety, or conduct of your presiding elder. Does he refuse or neglect to do the duties of a presiding elder as laid down and specified in the book of discipline? Is there aught against his Christian or ministerial character? I attended closely to the charges preferred against him at the late session of the New England Conference—to the testimony, and its application, in their investigation; and the conviction on my mind was thorough and abiding, that if brother Dorchester had allowed matters and things not required by the Discipline, to be introduced into, and acted upon, in his quarterly meeting conferences, in opposition to the solemn advice of the General Conference, there would not have been a complaint heard against him. In the absence of all specific objection in your request for his removal, (to say nothing of the anti-Methodist character of your convention, and without charging this irregularity to its true cause, which has also operated your mournful desolations,) I must respectfully inform you, that I do not see sufficient cause to remove brother Dorchester from the Springfield District.

Respectfully yours,

B. WAUGH.

In a letter to Mr. Dorchester, as quoted by Wm. Livesey in Zion's Herald of Nov. 6, 1839, the Bishop says: "There were remonstrances against your return," but, he adds, "Bishop Soule and myself both thought that the interests of Methodism required your return, and you were therefore re-appointed." On this a brief comment is offered: What is "Methodism"? What "interests" are those referred to by the Bishops? That the wishes of the people were not regarded as expository of Methodism, is evident from the fact that they objected to his appointment generally. That the personal feelings of Mr. Dorchester were not taken as expressive of Methodistic views, is shown in the letter of Bishop Waugh, just referred to. He says to Mr. Dorchester, "I distinctly remember your aversion to a re-appointment, and that you only submitted to it in view of the fundamental principles of our itinerant system." That the peace of the district, and prosperity of the Church, in the conversion of souls, was not contemplated as "the interests of Methodism," would seem evident from their knowledge of the suffering condition of the district, and the obnoxious character of the man whom they appointed over it—is not this what is meant? Methodism is that system of ecclesiastical arrangements adopted for the government of the Church, whose interests are identified with the Episcopal prerogatives of absolute control over all appointments in the ministry, and over the proceedings of the several annual conferences. To maintain this system, aside from considerations of utility or expediency, would seem to be what is meant by acting as the authorities did on behalf of "the interests of Methodism."

From a desire to connect important facts of a kindred class, the narrative has anticipated dates, and passed over incidents that deserve special mention, but which will be deferred to the coming chapter. But in connection with the controversy just now adverted to, which grew out of denying to the quarterly conferences the right to judge for themselves in matters coming before them, I give the following extract from an editorial in the Maine Wesleyan Journal of 1838: the editor, G. F. Cox, was not an abolitionist. It is here quoted from Zion's Watchman of Feb. 10. 1838.

"But we reply thirdly, and which, we trust, will settle the question,—The decision of the General Conference of 1804, places it beyond a doubt. It was there said—"Quarterly conferences are clothed with *judiciary power*—presiding elders, as chairmen, preserve order and settle questions of order, but **NOT OF LAW**, apart from the court over which they preside." [See an account of the session of that conference, by a member of the venerable body, in the Western Christian Advocate of 1836.] And this decision, it will be borne in mind, was made when the rules of our Church were made, and that too, after a long discussion upon this very point.

And we say this should settle the general question; because the presiding elders have all the powers of the Bishop given to them in the district over which they preside. And their trust is delegated to them in the same phraseology, as that which conveys the trust to the Episcopacy. The language of the Discipline is, in reference to the Bishops: "They shall preside in our conferences—shall change, receive and suspend preachers—shall travel through the connection at large—shall oversee the *spiritual and temporal business of the Church*." The trust is conveyed to the presiding elder in the following words: "To travel through his appointed district—to take charge of all the elders, deacons, travelling and local preachers, and exhort on his district—to change, receive and suspend preachers during the intervals of the conferences, and in the absence of the Bishop—to preside in the conferences in the absence of the Bishop—to oversee the *spiritual and temporal business of the Church in his district*—to take care that every part of discipline be enforced in his district." We say it *settles the question*, because the General Conference of 1804 has by its decision determined the fact first, that *judiciary power* belongs to the quarterly meeting conferences: and secondly, that the terms, "oversee the spiritual and temporal business of the Church," do not mean that they have power to settle "questions of law, apart from the court over which they preside." And with these sentiments agrees our practice. One case occurs to us, which we ought not to withhold. It was at the Maine Conference of 1835. Bishop Emory was in the chair. Some ten or twenty questions of law came up, from the quarterly conference, from Industry circuit, for decision. Bishop Emory proposed them to the conference for their decision. But to hasten business the author of this article, if he recollects rightly, rose and moved that the question be submitted to the chair. It was done: and the decisions of Bishop Emory were given. But his opinions all received the sanction of the conference by vote, and are thus recorded on the journals of the conference, as the opinion,

not of the Bishop, but of the conference. Moreover, we find more than *twenty decisions* of a judiciary character, at that single session, by the conference, besides the examination of character. And we venture to say, that there is not an annual conference in the United States, whose journals will not show, that from the beginning they have acted as *judiciary bodies* upon all questions of law. And we confess ourselves utterly surprised that any different view can be entertained by persons who have attended these bodies for any length of time. Indeed, we think when the *judging power* is taken from the conferences, they are so much less than a cypher, that they need never be used."

CHAPTER X.

DR. FISK RESUMES THE CONTROVERSY—J. HORTON AND L. LEE REPLY TO HIS ARTICLES—UTICA CONVENTION—A DELEGATE SENT TO CANADA—PLAN OF PACIFICATION—LOWELL CONVENTION—QUARTERLY CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS.

EARLY in the year 1838, the discussion was again resumed by Dr. Fisk, whose attention was, doubtless, directed again to the subject by the growing importance of the question of slavery, in the opinion of the public generally. He wrote ably in defence of the course of the Bishops in refusing to put to vote anti-slavery resolutions; claiming for them, as "rights," the prerogatives they assumed. But the most important productions of his pen were a series of letters, addressed "*To the Ministers and Members of the Northern and Eastern Conferences of the M. E. Church.*" The point to which he desired by these letters to call attention, he stated to be this: "That the doctrines and measures of modern abolitionism are revolutionary in their character and tendency, and must if persisted in, end in schism, and in the dismemberment of the Church of Christ." He argued that schism in the Church was forbidden by God—that if right in any case, it was not justifiable on the account of slavery, because its abolition could not thereby be effected. To prove that abolitionists were schismatics he adduced the following

facts, which embrace all his main arguments: They refuse to fellowship slaveholders as Christians. They array themselves in a hostile attitude toward their dissenting brethren, and destroy mutual confidence. They aim to alter the laws of the Church by forming associations within the pale of the Church. They would confine their patronage to such institutions and periodicals as favor their views. And finally, they are opposed to "Methodism as it is, as it was, and as it ever has been."

These letters, six in number, were spread over the columns of Zion's Herald, averaging each more than three columns of a medium sheet. They were first published in the Christian Advocate, at New York, and afterwards copied into Zion's Herald of Boston. An able review and reply was prepared by Jotham Horton, a distinguished minister then stationed in Boston. His replies were characterized by great candor, and kindness of manner, which commended them favorably to every reader, and did much to prevent any embarrassing influence among abolitionists, which otherwise might have been effected by Dr. Fisk's really able letters. Mr. Horton's reply to the positions of the Doctor embraced the following main points. The "divisions" God commands his Church to "avoid" are those "caused" by opposition, or "contrary to the doctrines" of righteousness and truth. Mr. Weasly's opinion of "all slaveholders" was quoted to sustain the non-fellowship doctrine of abolitionists. The "rancorous hostility" charged was kindly disclaimed and disproved, while the necessity of revolting facts, and the propriety of their use, was maintained in view of the character of the evil to be removed, and the acknowledged importance of the overthrow of slavery. The right to promote changes in the government of the Church, by means consistent with the constitution, was fully sustained—the consistency of directing all their energies to promote their views of truth and right was insisted on—and finally, the identity of ancient Methodism, and modern abolitionism, was clearly shown. This brief analytic view of the discussion is given, because of its real interest and importance, as one of the leading incidents of the times.

The same letters from Dr. Fisk were replied to most triumphantly

in Zion's Watchman, by Rev. Luther Lee, a member of the Black River Conference. His attention being directed to the subject of slavery, it was not long before his pen became prolific in the production of logical demonstrations, to the condemnation of slavery and in support of modern abolitionism. The first important effort was a series of letters in reply to Dr. Fisk, as before intimated. The positions of the Doctor were thoroughly sifted and scattered. This effort was succeeded by a number of articles on the sin of slavery, and the immutability of its moral character. His writings were instrumental, with frequent lectures, in producing a great change among the Methodists of Western New York favorable to anti-slavery principles.

About the same time O. Scott published a number of letters, addressed to Dr. Fisk, over the signature "Wesleyan," in which the early history of Methodist Abolitionism was given—the Doctor's course on the question of slavery and colonization was criticised candidly and kindly—and a comprehensive view of the great question, in all its length and breadth, was presented. The whole question of conference rights was also ably set forth and defended by the same writer, in a long letter to Bishop Waugh, in review of his course at the Nantucket Conference, over the signature "Coke." This was largely noticed in the official paper at New York. On this question Bro. Scott wrote extensively, as indeed on all occasions embraced in the discussion. There is now before me an immense volume filled with his productions, which would seem to be the result of years of constant labor.

Among the able writers not before named, to whose exertions much may justly be attributed, should be named Cyrus Prindle, of Troy Conference; D. L. Robinson, and Guy Beckley, of New Hampshire; Moses Hill, of Maine; J. D. Bridge, James Porter, P. Crandall, C. K. True, of New England; Schuyler Hoes, of Oneida, and D. Devine, of New York. Subsequently E. Smith and R. Beyd, of the Pittsburg Conference, exerted a powerful influence, beside many others. Without stopping to introduce anything further of individual movements, it becomes necessary now to notice the second great Methodist convention.

Pursuant to a call published at sundry times in Zion's Watchman, and other papers, for a convention of ministers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, friendly to the cause of immediate emancipation, to be held in the city of Utica, N. Y., on the second and third days of May, 1838, the convention met in the Methodist E. Church, in Utica, N. Y., on May second, 1838, at 9 o'clock A. M., and was ca'led to order by the Rev. Timothy Merrit, of Lynn, Mass. Wheraupon, the Hon. Seth Sprague, of Duxbury, Mass., was called to the chair, pro tem., and Rev. La Roy Sunderland appointed Secretary pro tem.

The committee appointed to nominate officers of this convention, made a report, which, after amendment, was adopted as follows:

Rev. Jared Perkins, Portsmouth, N. H., *President*; Hon. Seth Sprague, Duxbury, Mass., *Vice President*; Rev. La Roy Sunderland, N. Y., Wilder Huag, Rochester, N. Y., James Porter, Worcester, Mass., *Secretaries*.

A public and interesting address was delivered by Bro. Scott, on the connection of slavery with the Church, on Tuesday evening. A public prayer meeting was held on Wednesday morning at 8 o'clock; and, in the evening of the same day, a very able address was delivered by Rev. Luther Lee, of the Black River Conference, on the sin of slavery under all circumstances. The Convention

It was the decided opinion of the Convention, that it was not only our solemn duty to send an address to our British brethren, but also a delegate, whose duty it should be to lay before the Wesleyan Conference the facts in relation to the connection of the M. E. Church with slavery, together with the objects and measures of the abolitionists in said Church; as also to enlist their sympathies, counsels, and prayers, in the prosecution of our grand design, namely, the extirpation of slavery from the Church and the land. The Rev. O. Scott was unanimously elected to that office; and Rev. Luther Lee was elected a delegate to the Canada Conference.

This measure was considered a very important one, and the Methodist abolitionists throughout the country hailed with joy the prospect of being fairly represented in the Wesleyan Methodist Conference.

Pursuant to appointment, Luther Lee attended the Canada Conference, during the summer of 1838. The first information respecting his visit was given in the Christian Advocate and Journal of the 18th of July, 1838, where we find a letter from J. T. Peck, giving an account of his visit to the Canada Conference. Among other things the writer brings in the attendance of Luther Lee, at that conference, and says:

"Rev. Luther Lee, delegate from the Utica Anti-Slavery Convention, was present during part of the session; but before any of us arrived. The leading members of the conference resolved, that they could not receive him *in that office*. *The meeting by which he was appointed was considered by the Methodist E. Church proper as illegitimate and revolutionary in its tendency. The leading measures of the party were deemed by our General Conference and principal men as schismatical and highly dangerous.* They could not therefore, consistently with the friendly relations existing between the great bodies of Methodists, receive their representatives, or extend to them, in any sense, their official sanction. But, as a member of the Black River Conference, Bro. Lee was most cordially received, and treated with all that respect which his talents and rank among us merit. With this we were all perfectly pleased; and I must not fail to say, that the course of Bro. Lee, after he was informed of the views of the leading members of the conference, was highly creditable to himself as a gentleman and a minister."

"THE CANADA CONFERENCE."

"CANADA CONFERENCE."

MR. EDITOR:—The above is the title of an article published in the 619th No. of the Christian Advocate and Journal, from the pen of Rev. J. T. Peck, which, from the allusions it makes to myself, is entitled to a few moments of my attention.

The first thing I wish to correct is a mistake which I suppose the printer has made—for I cannot suppose that Rev. Professor Peck would make such a mistake. The printer, then, makes brother Peck say that "Rev. Luther Lee, delegate, from the Utica Anti-Slavery Convention, was present during part of the time; but before any of us arrived." Now the truth is, I did not arrive at the seat of the conference until brother Peck and his associates had been there two days, nor did I leave until some hours after they had taken their departure. And I may remark that I should not have left as soon as I did, had I not taken a formal leave of the

conference at the earnest request of brother Peck, who insisted upon my making an address to the conference, in behalf of all the brethren present, from the States ; and which, after much urging, I consented to do.

Again brother Peck says, "the leading members of the conference resolved that they could not receive him *in that office*." If by this brother Peck means, as the language imports, that such a resolution was passed in a conference capacity, or in any other *associated capacity*, to speak very modestly, *I think he is mistaken*. If it be so, I will be very thankful for a true copy of the resolution, for I have not to this day been informed of any such "resolve," nor of any other like it on the subject. If the leading members of the Canada Conference had any such proceeding of which I have not been informed, I shall be happy to stand corrected on the receipt of the information. On conversing with some of the leading members of the conference, I was referred to the president, who gave me the following statement of his views. The venerable father said they were with the abolitionists in principles, and that we might rest assured of their sympathies and their prayers, but that he thought it would be improper to receive me in a *conferencee capacity*, as an anti-slavery delegate, lest it should disturb the friendly relations subsisting between the two bodies. Indeed, this was the principal objection, and about all the one I heard mentioned, and that such an objection should exist was not strange, nor even unexpected to myself. What other state of things could have been expected in view of the course which the Christian Advocate has taken, and in view of the fact that brother Peck was present two days before I arrived, and assured them that if they received me it would most certainly break friendship between the two connections, *as he told me he did assure them*.

As to what brother Peck says of the anti-slavery principles of the Canada Conference, I have only to remark, that if they embrace the views of Pres. Fisk, Bishop Hedding, and the Rev. N. Bangs, I have very much mistaken the views of the one or the other, for I suppose them to be abolitionists in the common acceptation of the term. If the brethren in Canada think this a misstatement of their views, I shall take it very kindly if they will correct my mistake, for I do not wish to entertain wrong views of them or of any other class of men.

Fulton, July 20th, 1838.

LUTHER LEE.

The Christian Guardian has come to hand, in which we find the following testimony, which, it will be seen, the Wesleyan Conference in Canada bore in favor of Mr. Lee's attendance with them at their recent session :

" During the greater part of the proceedings of the late conference held at Kingston, several preachers from the United States were present and took part in the proceedings. The Rev. Mr. Peck, Principal of the Conference Academy, preached two excellent and deeply affecting sermons before the conference; and the Rev. Luther Lee delivered an able and beautiful address on the public admission of the young men (who had travelled four years) into full connection with the conference. Mr. Lee forcibly remarked, ' though civil discord had howled in the storm along the frontiers of the American States, yet the religious part of the community had no participation in those hostile and lawless proceedings. Previous to the departure of the American brethren, the following resolution was proposed and unanimously adopted by a rising vote :

" Resolved, That the cordial thanks of this conference be presented to our beloved and highly esteemed brethren, the Rev'ds. Luther Lee, Jesse T. Peck, C. W. Leet, and A. J. Phelps, of the Black River Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, for their attendance and company during the preceding part of the present session; and we gladly avail ourselves of this opportunity to express our unabated attachment to, and our affectionate union with our brethren on the south side of the St. Lawrence; and our earnest prayer to Almighty God is, that the great principle of Wesleyan Methodism may ever be maintained and strengthened, that 'the Wesleyan Methodists are one body in every part of the world.'

The delegate appointed to represent the Methodist abolitionists in America, at the Wesleyan Conference of England, was released from the prosecution of his mission, from considerations growing out of the visit to Canada by Mr. Lee, and the probability of being forestalled and embarrassed by remonstrances from the leaders in the Church here, addressed to the Wesleyan brethren.

At the ensuing session of the New England Conference, held in Boston, June 6, 1838, an effort was made to prevent the increasing agitation of the subject of slavery, by what was designated "A plan of Pacification." It was a proposal for compromise, that the abolitionists generally regarded as fatal to the cause of the slave. It reads,

" COMMON GROUND.

Whereas the Methodist Episcopal Church in the North has been and still is greatly excited on the subject of American Slavery, and the means which should be used for its removal from the Church—and

Whereas we deem it of vital importance that the peace of the Church should be secured, in order to her prosperity—

And, whereas it is recognized as a cardinal virtue in religion by our blessed Lord, that his followers should be "Peace Makers," and love one another—and which are even given as tests of discipleship.

Therefore, the undersigned, ministers of said Church, after mutual consultation, have agreed to adopt the following Principles and Measures for the purposes above named.

Principles.

We believe that the system of American Slavery is a great moral evil; and that the relations springing from this, which bind an innocent race to perpetual bondage to others against their wish, are sinful; although we concede that the master who sustains this relation, is not, in every case, necessarily guilty.

Measures.

We agree that, in any action we may be disposed to take on this or any other subject, we will—

1. Never attack an officer, clergyman, or private member of the Church in a public journal or lecture, or publicly arraign the official acts of any church officer; but all such difficulties shall be adjusted according to the Discipline of our Church. Provided, however, that this shall not prevent the courteous investigation of principles and opinions.

2. We agree that we will not countenance any brother in leaving his proper work to lecture upon this or any other subject, without the sanction of the proper authorities of the Church.

3. No paper shall be established ostensibly for the purpose above stated by our aid or sanction, or shall be countenanced by us, which claims to be controlled by any Wesleyan or Methodist societies, or having appellations attached to them peculiar to our Church.

4. We agree that no societies or conventions claiming the character specified in section 3d, shall receive our approbation or aid. Our conviction is that, in the present state of affairs, the peace of the Church claims at our hands that organizations of this character should not exist.

5. We hold that our ministers and private members are at liberty (nor shall it be regarded as an offence for them thus to do) to connect themselves as they may choose with any Anti-Slavery Society independent of the Church; provided, however, that our action in such cases shall not contravene the principles of this agreement.

6. It shall not be regarded as an offence by us—but considered just—that prayer be offered in public for the master and his slave,

or for the abolition of the system. But we recommend that the apostolic language be used, as far as may be, in such devotions.

7. Our preachers have liberty not only to read our rules once a quarter to the societies, and once a year to the whole congregation, but to explain at these seasons any part of our Discipline.

8. We hold that our people have the right of petitioning the General Conference through the yearly conferences or otherwise, upon this or any subject with which they have to do.

9. Nevertheless, in all circumstances relating to the above, we recommend to our preachers and people to exercise "the wisdom of the serpent and the harmlessness of the dove."

In corroboration of the adverse opinions expressed of the "Pacification," proposed, it need only be observed that a note of triumph was sounded at the South, in view of its adoption by the Maine Annual Conference, and it was published and approbated by the "Ashboro' Citizen," of North Carolina!

The effect of this "plan" eventually would be to commit the abolition conferences in such a manner that action in the future such as had obtained in the past, would be prevented, or render the actor liable to arrest and condemnation by the conference. The Methodist preachers of the "Granite State" regretted it almost unanimously.

As the abolition conferences were neither of them committed to "the plan," the struggle was still in progress. The discussion was continued, and the distinctive measures of the abolitionists were persevered in with abundant success. Unsuccessful attempts were made at the N. E. Conference to expel or censure prominent abolitionists. In some instances the members of annual conferences were arrested and suspended from their office and ministry for merely attending anti-slavery conventions. An account of some of these cases will be given hereafter.

In view of these facts, and in order to promote the general interests of the cause, it was determined to hold a convention in Lowell, Mass., and a call was issued, signed by near 1500 names, embracing some of the leading ministers and principal members of the three New England conferences. These names were all obtained in a few weeks. The convention assembled agreeably to appointment, on the 21st of Nov. 1838.

"The evening before the meeting of the convention, Rev. O. Scott delivered a lecture in Rev. Mr. Thurston's meeting-house, on the sinfulness of claiming man as property. At nine o'clock on Wednesday morning a public prayer-meeting was held in the Methodist Church on Chapel Hill. The convention was called to order at ten o'clock by Rev. T. Merritt, and Rev. J. Horton was appointed Chairman. The officers were then chosen, viz :

Rev. Joseph A. Merrill, Webster, Mass., *President*; Rev. T. Merritt, Lynn, Mass., Hon. Seth Sprague, Duxbury, Mass., Rev. I. Bonney, New Bedford, Mass., Rev. S. Chamberlin, New Market, N. H., W. D. Cass, Concord, N. H., *Vice Presidents*; La Roy Sunderland, New York, Elihu Scott, Great Falls, N. H., Lucius C. Matlack, Philadelphia, *Secretaries.*"

The committee of this convention prepared able addresses, suited to the position of affairs in the Church, which were published and extensively read. The reader will have observed on a previous page, an allusion to the authority assumed by presiding elders in the quarterly conferences; it may be well to specify, therefore, some instances, that were deemed oppressive, and as the proceedings are of a similar character every where, these few will suffice.

"At the call of Rev. H. Kinsley, the presiding elder of Meadville District, Erie Conference, (Dec. 19, 1838,) twenty-one of the official members of this circuit convened for quarterly meeting conference.

Some ordinary business was done, and the secretary read the following preamble and resolutions:

Whereas, a resolution was passed by the Erie Annual Conference, at its last session, in which it was judged incompatible with the duties and *obligations* of Methodist preachers to spend their time in delivering abolition lectures, attending abolition conventions, aiding in getting up abolition meetings, or circulating abolition papers; and whereas, some measures were pursued (as we believe) oppressive to some abolitionists, and injurious to that part of the Church of God to which we belong: therefore,

1. *Resolved*, By the Quarterly Meeting Conference of Randolph circuit, 'While we disclaim all intention of interfering with any man's private opinion,' and while we disavow any design to impeach any man's motives, or cast any reflections; that we sincerely regret the course pursued by the Erie Annual Conference, at its last session, in reference to abolitionism and some abolitionists.

2. Resolved, That we affectionately request that body, not to consider the resolution above referred to as law during the current conference year.

3. Resolved, That we earnestly entreat the conference to rescind the said resolution at its next session.

JONATHAN BROWN, Jr.

ASA DENSMORE.

The adoption of the 1st resolution was moved. The presiding elder objected to it, as not conference business. A motion was made to lay the resolution on the table. The presiding elder said he could not consent to have it brought into conference. The secretary proposed to the presiding elder to suffer the resolutions to pass the conference, and file his bill of exceptions with the journal of the conference. The presiding elder stated his exceptions to the resolutions, and their passage; among which was, the stale doctrine of his responsibility for the doings of the conference.

The 2d and 3d resolutions were read, and the adoption of the 2d was moved. The presiding elder would not put the motion to vote. A member of the conference asked, have we not the privilege of even offering prayer to the annual conference? Silence was an emphatic no!

The following resolution was offered:

Resolved, That when we adjourn, we adjourn to meet again in this house, on Monday next, at 9 o'clock, A. M., to sit with open doors. The presiding elder refused to put the resolution to the vote. And, although he afterward called for the reading of it, he still persisted in his refusal.

A motion for adjournment was now made. Instead of putting the motion, the presiding elder called for the place of holding the next quarterly meeting conference. The motion to adjourn was urged upon his attention. He continued to call for the seat of the next conference. At length brother Palmer, who had been a member of the body more than twenty minutes, named a place but received no second.

After some time the presiding elder called for the reading of the journal. A brother objected to its being read while motions remained before the conference. The presiding elder still called for the reading of the journal, and a motion was made that the journal be not read until the resolutions and motions before the conference be disposed of by the vote of conference. The presiding elder disregarded the motion, and continued to call for the reading of the journal. The secretary said he would read the journal when directed so to do by the conference. The presiding elder dismissed

the conference by benediction, upon his own responsibility, other wise ~~same~~ ceremony.

On the following Monday the officialty of the circuit, or a large majority of them, met and unanimously adopted the resolutions which were offered to the quarterly meeting conference; after which the following resolution passed unanimously:

Resolved, That we will not knowingly aid in promoting any man to official stations in the Church who opposes free discussion, or conference action on any moral subject.

On the evening of the same day, after the delivery of an excellent address by the Rev. Ralph Clapp, in the same place alluded to above, an anti-slavery society was formed, which numbered about one hundred and thirty members. Thank God and take courage.

Yours in behalf of suffering humanity.

ENSIGN B. HILL.

Randolph Circuit, Erie Conference, Jan. 28, 1839.

The following is from Zion's Watchman, of April or May, 1839.

MARSHFIELD AND N. W. DUXBURY, MASS.

BROTHER SUNDERLAND:—We deem it a duty which we owe to God and the Church to which we belong, to give you some account of the proceedings at our third and fourth quarterly meetings on Marshfield and North West Duxbury circuit. The third quarterly meeting was held in the Methodist meeting house in Marshfield, a house dedicated to the service of Him who came to “preach deliverance to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.” After the usual business of the Q. M. Conference was transacted, the P. E., Rev. B. Otheman, asked if there was any more business to be done? Brother J. Sprague rose and presented resolutions touching slavery, and the course pursued by some of our Bishops and presiding elders. After some discussion, the presiding elder said he was as much opposed to slavery as any body. He believed it to be a great curse to the nation. He said he was an abolitionist, and had no objections to putting the first two resolutions, which were as follows, viz.:

1st. “That liberty, both civil and religious, is the inalienable right of every human being.”

2d. “That to hold property in man is sin in all cases and under all circumstances.”

The above resolutions were unanimously adopted. The president then requested brother Sprague to withdraw the others. Bro. Sprague could not do it, but as the presiding elder wished it, he would let them lie over to the next quarterly meeting, which was

agreed to. At the fourth quarterly meeting held in the meeting house in North West Duxbury, after the usual business was disposed of, the following resolutions were brought forward, viz.:

1st. That while we mean no disrespect to the persons or offices of our Bishops and presiding elders, yet we feel in duty bound to declare our firm belief, that their claim of deciding what is and what is not the business of their respective bodies, and thus prohibiting a free expression of opinion on the great sin of slavery as it exists in the M. E. Church, is utterly unsupported by either the letter or spirit of our Discipline, and ought to be repudiated as dangerous precedents, which, in the end, might deprive the Church of her most sacred rights.

2d. Whereas, it is a Christian's duty to labor to attain to truth's utmost height, and whereas, truth can only be arrived at by discussion, therefore,

Resolved, That any efforts to suppress free and candid debate on any question of religion or morals, are decidedly and widely at variance with the liberal spirit of Christianity, and subversive of the plainest rights of man.

3d. Whereas, to be a Methodist does not take away the common rights of man, and whereas, it is the undeniable right of every man to associate with his neighbor for the various purposes of moral action, therefore,

Resolved, That Methodist Anti-Slavery Conventions, being associations for the purpose of combined moral action on the great evil of slavery, are not violations of our duty to God or the Church, but are founded in right and duty.

After the above resolutions were read, the presiding elder made some remarks, and then said, "to make short work of it, I shall not put them, and there need be no discussion on the subject." Bro. J. W. Simmons then moved that the resolutions be taken up separately and discussed: the motion was seconded, but the president refused to put the question. Bro. J. Sprague then moved that the doings of the third and fourth quarterly meeting conferences be published in Zion's Watchman and Zion's Herald. This motion was seconded, and the president again refused to put the question. Rev. E. B. Bradford, preacher in charge, then moved that the two resolutions that were passed be published. The vote was taken in the affirmative. The presiding elder then said, "Receive the benediction." Thus the meeting closed while there was a motion before the meeting, and that without the consent of the meeting.

JAMES SPRAGUE,
NATH'L BONNEY, JR.
J. W. SIMMONS,

} Members Q. M.
Conference.

The next is from an appointment in the same vicinity, the village of Duxbury, during the same conference year, but earlier.

At a quarterly meeting conference held at Duxbury, Mass., in the meeting house, Oct. 6th, 1838, Rev. Bartholomew Otheman, presiding elder of the district (Boston) presided. Rev. Hiram Cummings, preacher in charge. A large proportion of the stewards and leaders present. Seth Sprague, Sen'r., offered the following resolutions :

1. *Resolved*, That to hold our fellow men in slavery is sin.
2. *Resolved*, That some sins in themselves, and by reason of aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others.
3. *Resolved*, That for a professed Christian to hold slaves, is sin in itself, and aggravated by his profession of being a disciple of Christ.
4. *Resolved*, That liberty and slavery cannot exist together ; and that the same principle that holds a colored man in slavery would hold a white man if it had the power, and that the same principles of tyranny that persecute abolitionists hold the colored man in slavery.
5. *Resolved*, That slavery in the M. E. Church is like the wedge of gold and Babylonish garment in the ~~te~~ of Achab.
6. *Resolved*, That under God all power in church and state is in the people ; and that there is, in these United States, no order of nobility or priesthood above the people.
7. *Resolved*, That history and experience teach, that those entrusted with power are very liable to abuse it. Therefore it is the duty of the people to watch them and expose their first encroachments upon their rights.
8. *Resolved*, That it is with grief and alarm that we have observed a system of oppression and persecution set up and prosecuted by the New York Conference against abolitionists.
9. *Resolved*, That while God gives us the exercise of our reason and the use of our tongues, we will continue to plead for the slave ; mobs shall not deter us, nor civil or ecclesiastical bodies silence us.

The adoption of the resolutions being called for, the presiding elder requested the mover to withdraw them. The mover observed that he had formerly withdrawn one set of resolutions, out of courtesy to the presiding elder, and that he could not do it again. He wished these resolutions acted on, as he believed they spoke the sentiments of the church in this place.

The presiding elder said that no business could be done in a quarterly conference but what is specified in the Discipline, without the consent of the presiding elder and the conference. He then refused to put the resolutions, assigning the following reasons, viz :

1st. I cannot put the resolutions because I believe they will do no good.

2d. I cannot put them because I believe they will do harm.

3d. I cannot put them because they are in opposition to the advice of the General Conference.

4th. Some of them reflect upon the doings of an annual conference.

5th. Some of them have the appearance of reflecting on the official acts of our Bishops.

6th. I cannot put them because I do not believe the doctrine of the resolutions.

Bro. Sprague then made some remarks on the power assumed by presiding elders and Bishops which is not defined in the Discipline, as being irresponsible, arbitrary, and unprecedented in our Church, contrary to Scripture and the institutions of our country, and extremely oppressive and grievous.

The preacher in charge arose and said, if he understood the doctrine assumed by the president, it was this, viz : That he, as president of this conference, had the sole power of judging what business the Discipline allows to be done in a quarterly conference, and what not, and appealed to the president to say whether he was correct, assuring him that he desired to appeal if that was the law assumed.

The president repeated some remarks he had before made, but gave no direct answer to the inquiry. Consequently the appeal was not made.

The presiding elder then inquired if there was any more business to be done. Bro. S. replied, the resolutions were before the conference, and he could not present any until they were disposed of. He did not know but he might present some after they were acted on.

The president then said the conference must excuse him, as he must leave it. The members replied, they would not excuse him till the business was done. He then left the chair.

The preacher in charge then desired to know whether he closed the conference on his own responsibility, or whether he left the chair for him to fill? He replied that he *closed the conference.*

The preacher remarked, that such a course was a violation of our usages in annual as well as quarterly conferences. Bro. Sprague then remarked that it was these arbitrary measures that were alienating the feelings of our members from Episcopal Methodism, and disturbing the peace and harmony of the Church. He had watched these measures and their effects. He had no doubt but the abolitionists would have been as peaceable as lambs had it not been for

the unprecedented conduct and oppression of their opponents. On you, sir, and their opposers, rests the whole responsibility of this alienation and difficulty.

The president then left the house.

By a vote of the members of the conference the preacher in charge was requested to take the chair.

The resolutions were then adopted by a unanimous vote.

On motion of S. Sprague, Sen'r., it was unanimously voted, that the secretary furnish an attested copy of the doings of this quarterly meeting conference for publication in Zion's Herald and Zion's Watchman.

The following resolution, offered by S. Sprague, was then passed.

Resolved., That the course pursued by our presiding elder in reference to the foregoing resolutions, is contrary to the Discipline and usages of our Church, a violation of our rights as men and Christians, dangerous as a precedent, and to us a source of deep mortification and regret.

A true copy from the records—

JOHN M. DOANE, Recording Steward.

CLEVELAND, OHIO.

The quarterly conference of the Cleveland station, in the Erie Conference of the Methodist E. Church, commenced on Monday, P. M., March 11, 1839. The Rev. William Stevens, presiding elder, in the chair. After transacting the usual business of the conference, a brother offered a resolution on the subject of Temperance, which, after many objections and much hesitation on the part of the presiding elder, was received as business, and by vote of the conference, laid on the table. A brother then presented a resolution, (the presiding elder demanding its parport before he would suffer it to be read,) requesting our preacher to read from the desk all such notices of moral and religious meetings as might come from responsible sources. After much opposition from the presiding elder, and many repetitions of the charge that we meant to insult his grey hairs [!] he condescended to put the vote.

A brother next offered a preamble and set of resolutions on the subject of slavery, and the gag resolutions of the last Erie Conference. Again the chair protested against the reading, till he should know their contents! In vain (for a while) did the members call for the reading as explanatory of their sentiments. They were read, and now the war began. Vehement repetitions that we designed to abuse the chair, with the declaration, that he, the presiding elder, should *take the responsibility of preventing our action on the resolutions*, as long as he held the chair, stating it

was not conference business—that he, himself, presented the aforesaid obnoxious resolution passed at the Erie Conference, and it was abusive and premeditated revenge to ask him to put a vote against a resolution he had carried and helped to pass at the Erie Conference. He declared it not conference business. This decision was appealed from, but he would not put the vote of appeal, denying our power to appeal from *his* decision! The power of conference to decide what was proper business was strenuously urged; precedents were referred to in legislative and ecclesiastical bodies, showing that a vote of order was with the members of each body. He declared he would neither act nor leave the chair, but by request, called for the closing of the minutes, but there was a resolution on the table, and the members would not act upon it until the present was disposed of. The next call was for adjournment till the next evening.

On Tuesday 12th, pursuant to an adjournment, the conference met. Though the presiding elder was in town, he did not attend. Our preacher, brother E. J. Kenny, was called to the chair; the resolutions were then adopted unanimously.

J. W. REDFIELD, *Secretary.*

There is no necessity for swelling the account by additional facts. These show that the difficulty was two-fold. The two conferences claimed the *right* to determine what business should be done, and were disposed to censure the authorities of the Church for sustaining slavery. This action was deemed wrong by the presiding elders, and the right claimed was declared an assumption; who should be judge was not specified in the Discipline of the Church; the presiding elders claimed the right, on the ground of precedent established by the Bishops in the annual conferences. The people regarded these precedents as a violation of the principles of Methodism, and dangerous to the interests of the Church, and therefore discarded the claim set up in the quarterly conferences. The controversy continued until the General Conference of 1840. It was there settled by an amendment of the Discipline, expressly giving to Bishops and presiding elders all the authority they had claimed and exercised during the anti-slavery agitation, in the several annual and quarterly conferences.

Almost the entire history, thus far, has related to New England. The independence and characteristic intelligence of the people led

them to embrace the principles of modern abolitionism at an early period. New England Methodism soon became identified with abolitionism. Its character was the antipodes of a slaveholding church. Its action was necessarily in opposition thereto. To maintain the prerogative system of Methodist Episcopacy, this anti-slavery action must be prevented ; and hence New England became the principal arena of this strife. To yield to these prerogatives, was to extinguish the hope entertained by the abolitionists of reforming the church, and purifying her pale from the pollutions of slavery. But to repel successfully these claims of the authorities, was to secure and maintain freedom of action, and increase the probabilities of speedy success in giving deliverance to the captives, and in the opening of prison doors to them that were bound. For this reason the struggle was long and severe.

Having brought the New England part of the history of abolitionism down to within a short period of the General Conference of 1840, the present chapter will now be concluded. The next will embrace a sketch of similar movements that were at the same period transpiring in the other parts of the country.

CHAPTER XI.

ANTI-SLAVERY MOVEMENTS IN VARIOUS PORTIONS OF THE CHURCH, FROM 1836 TO 1838, SKETCHED BRIEFLY.

In no section of the country did anti-slavery sentiments find earlier or firmer friends than in the State of Michigan. The Methodist E. Conference of that state and vicinity, as early as 1836, contained quite a number of abolitionists. One of them writing from Marshfield, Ohio, Sept. 15, says in Zion's Watchman :

"DEAR BROTHER SUNDERLAND :—The Michigan Conference has just closed its first session, having been held seven and a half days. There was considerable business before the conference, some of it of a somewhat complicated nature, which required thorough investigation and much patience ; but, on the whole, there has been a

very harmonious session, and the preachers have gone to their respective fields of labor emboldened and encouraged by the success of the past year, to push on the future conquests of Messiah's kingdom.

The subject of slavery was not agitated in the conference for two reasons—first, the friends of abolition being in the minority, thought it not best to have the subject brought before the conference, as a report favorable to anti-slavery could not be adopted; and, secondly, the opponents of abolition were not disposed to smother free discussion. But rest assured, dear brother, that the cause of human rights is steadily and surely moving onward. Light is pouring in upon the Church in this part of our Zion, and she is beginning to see that she has been too long slumbering over this momentous subject, and that it is her duty to awaken, sound the trump of alarm, and rush on to the rescue of the hapless and enthralled sons and daughters of oppression.

I am confident, brother Sunderland, that the cause which we have espoused is the cause of righteousness, and that God will succeed our efforts. But if we would have the approving smile of heaven, we must do our duty—and, in doing it, we must be very careful in all we speak, and write, and do—for the monster Slavery, and his numerous defenders and apologists are argus-eyed, and are watching, closely, all our movements; and as soon as they detect any thing wrong in any one of them they commence a crusade of extermination against the whole—the press from Maine to Florida is made to groan under the mighty presence of wholesale slander and abuse. But let every abolitionist be faithful, and by the strength of Israel's God, we shall ultimately prevail over all the combinations of earth and hell that war against us.

Subsequent to this period the disposition to embarrass and oppose abolitionism was developed in this conference, and was the occasion of more energy on the part of its anti-slavery members, which will be hereafter noticed. Of Western New York, within the bounds of the Genesee Conference, a writer in the same paper, one month following, says:

"I find some in this region who are in favor of equal rights, of free discussion, notwithstanding the fact that the Watchman was sent back on its first appearance here. The good cause of abolition is on the advance in Western New York."

Not two weeks since I had an opportunity to attend the Hartford A. S. Society's monthly meeting; at which there were eighteen names added to the society.

The Genesee Conference has, I think, made rapid advancement for one year past in the noble and ennobling principles of the fathers of Methodism. About forty, (you may have heard the numbers more definitely from another source,) signed a petition to Congress to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia; and this has been effected, no doubt, in a great degree, by the Watchman. There are numbers of us who are anxiously waiting for the arrival of brother Storrs, who, we understand, is to spend the winter in this region. I might say many things, but forbear. This one thing, however, I will add, I am resolved to pray for the success of the abolition cause, and the divine blessing upon those who are laboring to promote it."

On the last day of December, 1836, at Meadville, Pa., Erie Conference, an anti-slavery society was formed of near seventy members. So wrote I. S. Barris, presiding elder of the district, Feb. 8, 1837.

During the month of March, 1837, twelve persons friendly to the formation of a Methodist Anti-Slavery Society, met at the residence of Henry J. Pepper, Philadelphia, Pa. Being in the immediate vicinity of slavery, and giving occasion for the first instance of proscription for conscience sake, by an annual conference, it is here mentioned particularly—more hereafter. In various places in Northern and Western New York, during this and the preceding year, societies were formed among the members of the churches and annual conferences, of which the particulars need not be given.

In the Watchman of July 29, 1837, there is a communication from A. Hanna, the Secretary of the Utica Wesleyan Anti-Slavery Society, giving notice of a convention to be held at Cazenovia, N. Y., the 3d day of August following. This was, I believe, the first Methodist anti-slavery convention. It embraced all within the bounds of the Oneida Conference. The following is an extract from the proceedings, as published by the secretaries:

"In pursuance to previous public notice, a convention of clerical and lay members assembled in Cazenovia, at the Methodist Church, on Thursday, August 3d, 1837, at 10 o'clock, A. M.

On motion, J. C. Delong, Esq. was called to the chair, and E. W. Goodwin appointed Secretary pro. tem. The meeting was opened with prayer by the Rev. B. G. Paddock—after which the object of the meeting was briefly stated by the chairman.

A committee consisting of Rev. Schuyler Hoes, Rev. Israel Hutchinson, Fardice Rice, William C. Rogers, and Henry Newland, was appointed to nominate and report officers for the convention.

A committee was also appointed, consisting of Rev. George Storrs, Rev. J. S. Mitchell, Rev. Joseph Cross, Rev. John Harvey, and E. W. Goodwin, to prepare and report business for the action of the convention.

The first committee now reported the names of James C. Delong, Esq., of Utica, for President, John F. Hicks, Esq., of Cazenovia, Benj. C. Cooper, of Pompey, Cornelius Swartwout, of Utica, Vice Presidents, and E. W. Goodwin of Auburn, and Wm. C. Rogers, of Utica, Secretaries; which report was accepted, and the gentlemen named therein were unanimously elected to fill the several offices to which they were nominated.

The discussions were participated in by the following ministers, and others: S. Hoes, G. Storrs, J. S. Mitchell, J. Cross, J. Harvey, P. M. Way, and B. J. Padlock. A large number of resolutions were adopted and published. Two days after this, eleven members of the Methodist Church at Utica issued a call for a convention of laymen, to be held at New York Mills, Aug. 23, 1837. This also was well attended, and productive of good results.

At the Cazenovia convention a committee was appointed to call a convention of Methodists throughout the State. This committee fixed upon Oct. 4th and 5th, 1837, as the date, and Auburn, Cayuga County, N. Y., as the place. But in view of having a general convention from all the non-slaveholding conferences, and to accommodate the New England brethren, who contemplated a convention about the time above named, they deferred it until the spring of 1838, when the general convention, noticed in the last chapter, was held.

While the Genesee Conference for 1837 was in session, memorials were presented to that body, signed by hundreds of church members, on the subject of slavery in the Methodist Church. The memorialists were replied to adversely, and very insufficient reasons alleged for not consenting to condemn slavery. This report was replied to by the memorialists of Utica, J. C. Delong, A. Hanna, W. C. Rogers, H. Newland, and others, in a most triumphant man-

ner. But Rev. Israel Chamberlayne, editor of the Auburn Banner, who published the report, refused to insert the reply.

On the Meadville district, Erie Conference, a large and interesting meeting was held, Oct. 17, 1837. It was composed of the travelling and local preachers on the district. A report was adopted, deprecating the encroachments of slavery upon the Church—the reluctance manifested by many to rebuke and oppose it—and recommending the use of every lawful and peaceable means to bring about the abolition of slavery. The report was signed by J. S. Barris, the presiding elder, A. Hall, and S. H. Hitchcock. These items are but a small part of the facts relating to the anti-slavery action in the various parts of the country to which they relate. But they will afford an ample index of the volume of facts on this subject, as they actually transpired. Among other facts in furtherance of the same design, the following will be of interest to the reader.

The feeling of many in Michigan has already been intimated. No conference action was attempted in 1836 or 1837. The abolitionists were in the minority, and those who differed with them were not oppressive or arbitrary in their course. This promoted peace, and encouraged freedom of action among the ministers and people, in the intervals of conference, on the subject of slavery. A different course, however, was pursued at the session for 1838. To the great surprise of many and grief of some, the following resolutions were adopted, condemning the course of abolitionists, and Zion's Watchman, their principal organ :

Whereas, There has been, and still is, much excitement in the Methodist Episcopal Church, upon the subject of abolitionism ; and whereas, we believe such excitement is prejudicial to the interests of the Church ; therefore,

Resolved, That it is the duty of the members of this conference to refrain from agitating the Church, by forming abolition societies in or out of the church, or by attending Methodist abolition conventions.

Resolved, That the Zion's Watchman is anti-methodistical in its general course, and that it is the duty of the members of this conference not to patronize or circulate it.

Resolved, That those preachers who take a course that is calculated to injure the circulation of our official periodicals, to give

place to abolition or other periodicals, violate their obligations to the Church, and should be dealt with accordingly.

Resolved, That the secretary be, and hereby is, instructed to furnish a copy of the foregoing resolutions to the Western Christian Advocate and the Christian Advocate and Journal for publication.

So far from suppressing the anti-slavery of Michigan Methodists, it gave to it life and vigor. Zion's Watchman contains an account of an interesting annual meeting of their state anti-slavery society. It was their first anniversary, and held near Sharon, Washtenaw Co., Feb. 9, 1839.

Delegates were appointed to attend the general convention at Utica, to be held the May following. An able address was prepared, and a committee appointed to present it to the ensuing session of the Michigan Annual Conference. This address to the conference was called forth in view of the resolutions of the previous session, quoted above. Although several lengthy documents touching the question of slavery in its various aspects, have already been laid before the reader, the points embraced in the above named address are rather peculiar, and may be of interest to all. It presented unanswerable arguments in opposition to the views of those whose sentiments were expressed by those resolutions. There have been presented specimens of the character and ability of northern and eastern abolitionists, in this volume, and it would not be well to allow the Michigan brethren to be unrepresented in that respect.

Rev. Wm. M. Sullivan, of Michigan, wrote at my request the following narrative of abolition movements in Michigan :

The abolition members of the M. E. Church in Michigan were organized February 9, 1839. The originators of this society met in the town of Sharon, Washtenaw Co., at the above mentioned date, and in framing their plans, they designed their organization, as far as possible, to recognize the "conventional principle," so much regarded by Methodists the world over.

The constitution which they adopted made them a State society, and other societies formed within the M. E. Church were auxiliary. The object which they supposed they would gain by this was to meet, with a concerted action, subsequent emergencies that might arise

in the spread of anti-slavery principles. A lecturer was employed in the commencement of the operations of this society. His work was to bring the claims of the enslaved before the Methodist people of this State, as far as it was practicable. He succeeded this year in forming a number of auxiliaries, and in the delivery of about two hundred lectures and sermons.

Four quarterly conventions of the society were held during the year; one in Plainfield, Oakland Co., another in Medins, Lenawee Co., the third in Salina, Washtenaw Co., and the fourth at Ann Arbor. These meetings were well attended, considering their distance from each other, and the amount of opposition we had to encounter.

In one respect our condition in this State has differed from Methodist abolitionists of other States. We have had, at no time, any help from the itinerant ministry of the M. E. Church. When Zion's Watchman was first published and sent gratis to many of the northern preachers, a few of this class in this State professed to be abolitionists, and blustered a little in its support, but at their annual conference of 1838, the anti-abolition screws were brought to bear upon them, and they basely submitted, and that has been the last of abolition in this body of ministers. From that day to this, not one member of the Michigan Annual Conference of the M. E. Church has been known, in any public manner, to identify himself with the abolitionists of this State. God has his own way in raising supplies, when a great moral change is about to be effected. Many of the local preachers, and official laymen, men of reputation and worth, rushed to the rescue, and with surprising boldness and energy maintained the cause, which was forsaken by their pastors. This, with the aid we derived from abolitionists in general, kept up a good degree of purity and fervor in our society.

The officers of the Michigan State Anti-Slavery Society were the following: Amasa Gillet, Sharon, *President*; Rev. Marcus Swift, Naankin, and Rev. Laban Smith, Bloomfield, *Vice Presidents*; Rev. Wm. M. Sullivan, Jackson, *Secretary*; Dr. V. Meeker, Leslie, *Cor. Sec.*; Lyman Jenkins, Sharon, *Treasurer*; Rev. Hagar Morey, Rev. Edmund Young, Geo. J. Barker, and Luke Gil-

bert, of Sharon, Rev. William Crane, Eaton Co., Rev. Joseph Edmondson, Ridgway, Rev. Samuel Nobles, Ann Arbor, *Managers*.

A committee was appointed by the society to place a copy of their *Address* in the hands of the presiding Bishop of the ensuing conference, with the request that he should lay it before that body at their next session. The committee were Marcus Swift, Amasa Gillet, Anthony Yerkes, Samuel Nobles, Dr. V. Meeker, Wm. M. Sullivan and Hagard Morey.

In a former chapter the labors of Orange Scott and George Storrs were noticed. They were instrumental in forming several societies composed of members of annual conferences. At the first anniversary meeting of the Genesee Anti-Slavery Society, held during the session of the annual conference for 1838, a mob was excited, which entirely prevented their meeting at one time, although they managed to do their business, with some difficulty.

At the session of the Genesee Conference, in 1839, it became necessary to choose delegates to the General Conference of 1840. The recommendation of the N. E. Conference to alter the general rule so as to forbid slaveholding, also came up for consideration. These subjects excited deep feeling, and a spirited discussion was had upon the latter, which continued two days. The evening before the discussion began, forty of the anti-slavery brethren met and agreed, if possible, to defer the New England resolution until after the election of delegates. But those who opposed them in the conference were not like minded. During the discussion it was urged by these that the proposed alteration was revolutionary; and great efforts were made against abolitionists in general, and the editor of Zion's Watchman in particular. A great deal was said of the proscription practised by abolitionists, and the nomination of abolition delegates by the anti-slavery men, was adduced in evidence, and their pledge to support these alone declared proscriptive. When the vote was taken at the close of the second day, sixty stood up for non-concurrence with New England, and thirty for concurrence. Many did not vote either way. This was deemed a triumph of the opponents of anti-slavery, and they prepared to divide the spoil.

A meeting was immediately announced, "of those opposed to all proscription," to nominate General Conference delegates, to be voted for the following day. They met, and at once, prohibited all from co-operating with them, who were pledged to vote for anti-slavery candidates. A ticket was nominated, which was far from satisfactory.

Both parties, in Conference, evidently dreaded coming to the election :—each hoped for success, and each dreaded defeat, but at last the trial came ; six delegates were to be elected. One hundred and twenty-five votes were cast. Sixty-three were necessary to a choice. Of the anti-slavery ticket, Asa Abell had 73 ; John Parker, 67 ; Jonas Dodge, 63 ; A. N. Fillmore, 64. Of the opposition ticket, Glezen Fillmore had 63, and Manly Tooker, 63.

At the session of the Black River Conference for 1838, Luther Lee located ; and from that time forward, devoted himself wholly to the advocacy of anti-slavery sentiments, being an agent for the New-York State Society. At the close of one of his lectures in Utica, N. Y., 130 names were added to the Wesleyan Anti-slavery Society. As a specimen of the opposition he had to contend with, in advocating abolitionism at that period, the following letter is inserted :—

"DEAR BROTHER :—A few weeks since, I gave you a little account of a mob, since which, it has occurred to me, that it might be interesting to your readers, to furnish, from time to time, an account of the most important occurrences, which may attend my labors, as a lecturing agent of the New-York State Anti-slavery Society—for you are already apprized that such is my calling for the present year.

"On Friday, after the mob already described, I was blest with another, as I was delivering a lecture in the Methodist meeting-house, at Crane's Corners, in Litchfield, Herkimer County, N. Y. This, like the former, was got up by the lovers of whiskey. I discovered, as I entered the Church, that a rude company were collecting about the door, and concluded that we should have some disturbance, but the leading brethren were not expecting any such thing, as we had no Christians in

this place, who did not care if the abolitionists were mobbed. Soon after meeting commenced, it was manifest to me, that Satan was on the spot, attended by his faithful ally, king alcohol, for the noise and shout of a king was heard in Satan's camp. I proceeded, however, without much interruption, until I had nearly finished my discourse, when the enemy charged. The first shot did not take effect, for some cause, but they soon reloaded, and one was heard to say, 'now shoot him in his eyes;' and the next instant, the charge came, which did execution, though the eyes escaped. The reader must not be alarmed for my safety, for had I been killed, I could not have given an account of it: 'He that fights and runs away, may live to fight another day,—but he that is in battle slain, can never live to fight again.'

"However, I neither ran nor fell on this occasion. If the reader wishes to know what kind of a gun the enemy used on the occasion, he is informed it was a squirt gun, charged with whiskey and lamp black. I finished my discourse, for I found that I could talk with a black face just as well as with a white one, and remarked, in conclusion, that no doubt that was the best argument they had, with which to oppose abolition, and that though the congregation could all see that it was a very striking argument, one which a man could not get rid of so easily as some others, yet it was not a convincing argument, and could never prove abolitionists to be wrong. It reminded me of the cowardly sailor, who hid himself at the commencement of a battle among some casks; but soon a cannon ball struck a tub of butter near him, and covered him with its contents, whereupon he rushed into the scene of action, crying, 'there is no danger, they shoot nothing but butter'—and so, they have got to shoot something at me worse than whiskey and lamp black, before I shall be conquered or disengaged, in pleading the cause of the oppressed. I do not know but some would contend that this mob was got up under the 'golden rule,' for the mob, no doubt, would, all of them, like to have whiskey put into their faces, and most of them, rather than not to have the whiskey, would be willing to take a little lamp black with it!"

"Yours, for God and the oppressed,

"LUTHER LEE.

"Peru, N. Y., Oct. 16, 1838."

Having labored in this region until the summer of 1839, Ma-

Lee removed to New-England, and became the General Agent of the Massachusetts Abolition Society.

Having introduced to notice the movements of the abolitionists in New-England generally—in Michigan and Western New-York, the chapter will be concluded with a brief sketch of similar proceedings in parts of Pennsylvania.

In Philadelphia, a society was formed in March, 1837, as before noted. Its members were diligent in the circulation of anti-slavery periodicals among the Methodist. They were represented, by delegates, in the Utica and Lowell Conventions of 1838. To the influence of this society may, perhaps, be attributed the fact, that while in New-York city, anti-slavery preachers were excluded from most, or all, of the Methodist pulpits, there the largest churches were open to them, even while engaged in anti-slavery agencies. Among the early and devoted friends of the cause, in this city, it affords the author great pleasure to mention H. J. Pepper, G. C. Wilson, T. Condell, T. T. Mason, Lewis Thompson, Lewis Bebee, D. N. Sinn, L. Soby, and others of kindred spirit.

At Bustleton, near Philadelphia, a society was formed, of more than forty members, of which John G. Chase was chairman. Both of these societies were subsequently much afflicted, by the persecution of some of their members for opinion's sake. The particulars hereafter.

At Clarke, Honesdale, Meadville, (as before named,) and other places, flourishing societies were formed. The Philadelphia Annual Conference, however, gave no evidence of sympathy with abolitionism: and very few of its members were ever suspected of leaning that way. Excepting two or three among the juniors, they were nearly unanimous in efforts to oppose and crush any developments of that character.

The reason of this may be found in the fact that the slaveholding State of Delaware, and part of the Eastern shore of Maryland, are within the limits of that Annual Conference. And, until recently, some of the ministers have been slave-

holders, to my personal knowledge. As late as the session of that body for 1846, a slaveholder was elected to elder's orders, showing how little they were affected with anti-slavery feeling in that region. In no section of the country has so little sympathy been awakened in behalf of the slave, among Methodists, as in Pennsylvania.

In a letter to the author, dated January 22, 1848, J. P. Betker says, "The only anti-slavery Convention of Methodists, after 1836, in Pittsburgh, Pa., convened pursuant to a call in handbill form, published by myself, in 1839." The cause, however, advanced by the efforts of individual ministers; among whom stood foremost Rev. E. Smith, of the Pittsburgh Conference, whose proscription for abolition's sake will be noticed hereafter.

CHAPTER XII.

A NEW PAPER STARTED—GENERAL CONFERENCE OF 1840—DELEGATES' NAMES—RUMORED PROSCRIPTION—ANTI-SLAVERY PETITIONS—NEW-YORK MEMORIAL—REPORT ON SLAVERY—O. SCOTT'S SPEECH—BISHOP HEDDING'S COMPLAINT—S. COMFORT'S CASE—BISHOP SOULE'S RESOLUTIONS—COLORED MEMBERS' MEMORIAL—ACTION ON CONFERENCE RIGHTS—WESTMORELAND PETITION—NEW-YORK AND NEW-GARDEN CONVENTIONS.

IN the preceding chapter, the movements of anti-slavery Methodists out of New-England, from 1836 to 1838, were, to some extent, presented to notice. In a previous chapter, the movements in New-England, with other facts, were traced down to the same period. This will continue the general narrative.

Passing over many incidents, during 1839, similar to those

related, the following facts are submitted to the reader, as sufficient to mark the progress made. Prior to the General Conference of 1840, at Baltimore, the New-England Annual Conferences chose anti-slavery delegates to represent them. So, also, did two or three other Conferences. Memorials to the General Conference from two Annual Conferences, hundreds of ministers, and thousands of members, were also prepared and forwarded.

On the 6th of January, 1840, a new anti-slavery paper was issued in Lowell, Mass., Jotham Horton and Orange Scott, editors, called the American Wesleyan Observer. Its principles were liberal—suited to general reading. The special design was to furnish New-England Methodists with a channel of free discussion on slavery. It proposed to continue for six months, which would include the sittings of the General Conference, whose proceedings would thereby find an early communication to the public. It proved to be a spirited sheet; sustaining well the character of its worthy editors and correspondents.

No events of special importance occurred prior to the General Conference of 1840, in Baltimore. During its sessions, several incidents oceured, deserving notice at this time.

Prior to its commencement, a series of articles from Dr. Bangs appeared in the Advocate and Journal of New York, on the subjeet of "Union." They were more especially designed to show the power of the General Conference over an Annual Conference, and affirmed that it could cut off an Annual Conference in a supposed case of dereliction, from the denominational standard. These articles, with sundry rumors afloat in the vicinity, led many to conjecture that it was contemplated to cut off the Abolition Conferenees, or, at least, prevent some of the more obnoxious anti-slavery delegates from being allowed a seat in that body. Much attention was directed to these matters by the abolitionists, and some public discussion ensued. It was understood, subsequently, that Dr. B.

disclaimed the application some had made of his arguments. And, if the purposes named above were entertained, they were abandoned, as no such plans were ever named in public. An incident in the Committee on Slavery strengthens the probability that violent measures were contemplated, in reference to some individuals, at least. The fact alluded to was this: when the subject of preparing a report was considered, the Northern members, not abolitionists, were unwilling to express an opinion of slavery in their report. This conservative course was displeasing to the Southern members, who wanted them to say that slavery was a moral evil, if they thought so. Said Wm. Smith, "We, at the South, do not believe slavery a moral evil. If you from the free States think with us, say so. But if you think it is a moral evil, hands off that brother," pointing to Orange Scott. This may have been suggested by an intimation that such a "laying on of hands" was thought of by some. In view of other facts, it is repeated that this "strengthens the probability."

The General Conference of 1840 was organized May 1. It consisted of 145 delegates from twenty-eight Annual Conferences. John A. Collins was chosen Secretary, and James B. Houghtaling and Thomas B. Sargent, Assistants.

The next day the presentation of anti-slavery petitions commenced. The first was offered by Orange Scott. It was from New-York city. A slaveholder, J. Early, at once moved the appointment of one from each Conference, as a Committee on slavery. That Committee consisted of the following persons: N. Bangs, O. Scott, D. B. Randall, J. Templeton, T. Spicer, R. Hopkins, J. C. Ayres, S. Chace, G. Peck, J. H. Power, J. Parker, L. L. Hamline, A. Munroe, H. Crews, H. H. Bascom, A. Eddy, E. F. Sevier, S. S. Moody, J. M. Holland, E. V. Levert, G. F. Pierce, W. M. Wightman, J. Jamieson, Wm. A. Smith, S. Brison, M. Sorin, and R. W. Petherbridge. Four of the twenty-eight were abolitionists. The doings of this Committee will be hereafter noticed. Anti-slavery petitions

and memorials were presented, by the following persons, from the places named:

ORANGE SCOTT, presented, during the session, the following petition and memorials: From the New-England Conference, read and referred—New-York city; Lowell, Gill, Weymouth, Holliston, Greenfield, Nantucket, Northfield, Charlestown, Leyden, Claremont, and Brookfield, Mass.; Square Pond, Conn.; Rochester, Vt.; Oswego and Louisville Circuits, Black River Conference; Courtlandville, Cazenovia and Leyden, Oneida Conference; Plymouth and Wooster Circuits, Michigan Conference; Seneca Falls, Genesee Conference; Troy and Cincinnati, Ohio Conference; Ipswich, Mass.; Barnesville, Pittsburgh Conference; Newport and Economy, Indiana Conference; Penn-Yatau, Genesee Conference.

JOSEPH A. MERRIL; from Springfield, Webster, and Duxbury, Mass.; Barnesville Circuit, Erie Conference.

PHINEAS CRANDALL; from New-Bedford and Fall River, Massachusetts.

JOHN PARKER; from Copely, Michigan Conference; and the Quarterly Conference of Victor Station, Genesee Conference.

JONAS DODGE; from Ridgeway, Lewiston, Palmyra, Middleport, Walworth, and Poultneyville Circuits, and Newark Station, Genesee Conference; East Cayuga and Speedville Circuits, Oneida Conference.

GLEZEN FILLMORE; from the Genesee Annual Conference; read and referred.

ASAHEL N. FILLMORE; from Medina Station, and Sweden Circuit, Genesee Conference.

JOTHAM HORTON; from Wesley Station, Lowell, and Lunenburg, Mass.

ABRAM D. MERRIL; from Providence, R. I.

EZEKIEL ROBINSON; from Kent's Hill and Greenfield, Me.; Farnsworth, N. H.; and from the Maine Annual Conference. The last—as read.

ASA ABELL; from Middlebury, Vt.; Liberty and Naples Circuits, Genesee Conference.

TRUMAN SEYMOUR; from Berkshire and Moore Circuits; and from Shelburne and Ferrisburg, Vt.

SHERMAN MINOR; from Weybridge Circuit, Troy Conference.

ELIJAH H. PILCHER; from the Quarterly Meeting Conference of Kingham, Michigan Conference.

EZEKIEL W. STICKNEY; from Providence.

R. C. BAILEY; from Exeter Circuit, Maine Conference.

MANLY TOOKER; from Canandaigua Circuit, Genesee Conf

SCHUYLER CHAMBERLAIN; from Kingston Circuit and Sand Town Station, New-Hampshire Conference.

JAMES TEMPLETON; from Chelsea, Vt.

GARDNER BAKER; from Mexicoville, Black River Conference.

ELIAS BOWEN; from Madison and Morrisville, Oneida Conf

Z. PADDOCK; from New-York Mills, Oneida Conference.

As the presentation of petitions constituted the first and a prominent movement of abolitionism at this Conference much pains has been taken to examine the published journal and give a particular account of it. It will be of interest to all to know these facts.

The importance attached to this mode of action, by some will be appreciated more fully from the following incident Wm. M. Bunting, the son of Jabez Bunting, D. D., of the English Wesleyans, at an anti-slavery meeting held at New-Castle, Aug., 1840, said—

"There is only one step further which we could take. And in coming to Conference, I assure you it was an anxious question with me, whether we ought not to proceed to something more practical, amounting to a disclaimer of all future connexion with the American Church, while she continued in sin—(applause). If you will permit me, I will just tell you on what grounds I came to the negative of that question. In the first place, because by such a step we should forfeit the opportunity and right of reiterating the remonstrances which experience had already been in a great degree effective; and in

the second place, because I considered, that while there are to be found some of the worst specimens of fallen nature in America, there are also to be found there some of the noblest specimens of humanity. I knew that memorials, from upwards of 10,000 Methodists, had been presented to the Baltimore Conference, in favor of abolition, and that among them, were upwards of 500 ministers; and I was informed they constituted only a tenth part of the members of the Episcopal Methodist Church of America, who hold the same sentiments."—Quoted from the *New-Castle Courant*, Aug. 14, 1840.

One of the petitions from New-York, presented by Orange Scott, purported to be signed by more than eleven hundred members of the Church in that city. This astounded the New-York delegates and others, who supposed that abolitionism was almost destroyed there by their vigorous persecutions. As this is a curious affair, and will develop some interesting facts, showing the vigorous opposition anti-slavery men had to contend with, it will be given in detail. How remarkable, that so much pains should be taken, by distinguished clergymen, to prove that their people did not feel for "those in bonds as bound with them!"

When the news reached New-York, two, or more, wrote to Dr. Bangs on the subject, who sent, forthwith, on his own responsibility, and without consulting the Committee on Slavery, said memorial back to the city. A great Committee, of some thirty persons, was appointed to scour the city, in order to ascertain who and what these signers were. This examination resulted in a Protest from New-York. This protest, with the accompanying documents, was borne from New-York to Baltimore, we believe, by C. A. Davis and D. M. Reese. By request of Dr. Bangs, C. A. Davis came forward and took his seat near the altar, to assist in presenting the protest and documents.

The protest stated, in general terms, that the memorial had been signed by 813 females! This would leave 341 males. It

further charged the memorial with fraud and forgeries: and stated that it was an imposture and libel.

The Committee on Slavery, through Dr. Baug, chairman, reported on the Protest, but their report was never taken up from the table. It contained a condemnation of all abolition movements in general, and the New-York memorial in particular. But the firmness of Orange Scott, who challenged an investigation of the whole affair in the city of New-York, and charged Messrs. Davis and Reese with getting up the protest for effect, cooled the ardor of his foes, and taught them that prudence was the better part of valor.

An investigation was instituted by the Abolitionists in New-York, in reference to the getting up of the Protest, when it was clearly proved, that the most unfair means were used to accomplish the work of defaming the Abolitionists. It was ascertained, that the double signatures, on the memorial, were occasioned by inadvertently mixing the petitions on temperance and slavery, both having been signed by the same persons. The alleged "forgeries" were admitted to be genuine by the signers, or sworn to, by the person obtaining their signatures. The names specified as "not members" by the protest, were all proven to be members in good standing. The "fictitious names and places" sustained by citing the name of Miss Patten, 219 Allen-street, who could not be found, by the "protest"-ers, was disproved, by finding her at 129 Allen-street. Those who "had not signed the memorial" on Slavery were by mistake transferred from the one on temperance, which they did sign. Those who consented to be reported as "imposed upon," were interrogated by the "protest"-ants as follows: Did you sign the petition for amalgamation?—for the division of the Church?—for a new Discipline? &c., &c. Surely they were imposed upon by the enemies of abolition! The whole affair was made to bear quite another aspect. An extended report of the triumphant vindication of the memorial presented by O. Scott, was published in Zion's Watchman for

June 27, 1840, and in the American Wesleyan Observer for July 9.

The action of the Committee on Slavery having these petitions in charge, deserves particular attention. The first report of the Committee, May 14, was that they wished to be discharged from the consideration of the acts of the Annual Conferences on the subject of Slavery. This was not granted. Their next report presented the following propositions:

" 1. That it is inexpedient to express any opinion, or to adopt any measures to control or modify Slavery as it exists in the United States, other than those now recognized in our book of Discipline.

" 2. That the General Conference, in its legislative capacity, has no authority to expound the general rules of the Discipline.

" 3. That it is to be regretted that Annual Conferences have, in some instances, expressed conflicting opinions on the item on Slavery in the general rules, and on the subject generally; and considering the great delicacy of this subject, as well as the necessity of union among ourselves, it is the will of the General Conference that the Annual Conferences, in their action upon this subject in future, should closely adhere to the language of the Discipline, as it now stands.

" Respectfully submitted,

" Baltimore, May 19, 1840. N. BANGS, *Chairman.*"

When this was offered, the minority asked leave to present a counter report, but it was denied. In the speech of Orange Scott against the above report, everything was said that they desired to offer. When he rose to speak, the rule limiting speakers to fifteen minutes was suspended. The official reporter of the General Conference, for the New-York Advocate and Journal, said:—

" The speaker's manner throughout was dispassionate and conciliatory, and his whole address free from offensive or inflammatory epithets. He was heard with the greatest respect and attention by the body, and by a very large audience, which had convened to listen to the debate on this theme."

A spirited discussion ensued, but no action was had by which the resolution of the report became the language of the Gene-

ral Conference. After the famous Protest was referred to the Committee on Slavery, another series of resolutions were offered condemnatory of all abolition movements. But they were never acted on. The whole result of their labors, during many long sessions and heated discussions, was—nothing!

The trial and acquittal of O. Scott and L. R. Sunderland, at the New-England Conference, on charges preferred by Bishop Hedding, will be given in detail hereafter. This event was the occasion of an interesting discussion, when Bishop Helding, May 9, presented a memorial to the General Conference, and stated that, at a Conference in 1838, he had complained of two brethren for saying improper things against him; that the Conference had acquitted those brethren contrary to what he believed was the law and evidence in the case; and he advised them at the time, that though he believed they had erred in judgment, and not in intention, in clearing these brethren, yet inasmuch as he believed them verily guilty, and ought to have been condemned, and as their acquittal involved an implied censure upon him, that he had determined to call the attention of the General Conference to this case, as recorded on the journals of that Conference; though he supposed he had no right to an appeal. He had not stated to what Conference he referred, but he would do so if the General Conference desired it. N. Bangs arose and moved that the case be referred to a select committee of five, which was carried, and the committee were appointed as follows: N. Bangs, Wm. H. Raper, Geo. Peck, J. Dempster, and J. Early.

Two weeks after this, the committee reported that the Bishop and the delegates from the Annual Conference complained of, had a meeting in their presence, and the difficulty was "amicably settled." A few days after, the Committee on Itinerancy presented a report.

"This report consisted of exceptions taken to the administration of the different Conferences, and prescribed, in the form of resolutions, rules for the regulation of their administration, in

future. In the preamble, the New-England Conference, O. Scott and La Roy Sunderland were alluded to in terms of great severity.

After adopting the resolutions, with which the report concluded, Mr. Dodge moved to amend, by introducing an exception to the Georgia Conference resolutions, which declared that slavery, as it exists in the United States, is not a moral evil. He supported his motion by a forcible and highly creditable speech. He was replied to by Rev. Mr. Hodges, of Georgia, who attempted to define the resolutions and defend them by the peculiar circumstances under which they were passed. Then it was moved and seconded to lay the motion of Mr. Dodge upon the table; which prevailed by a strong majority. So that the Conference refused to take exceptions to the Georgia Conference resolutions. J. Horton moved that all that part of the preamble of the report relating to the New-England Conference be laid on the table—lost. P. Crandall moved that that part of the preamble be stricken from the report, and supported his motion by a pertinent speech. Mr. Stickney followed, and warned the Conference against the fearful consequences of the New-England Church, of sending out that portion of the preamble.

Bishop Hedding then arose, and advised that that part of the preamble be stricken out, and after expressing his strong attachments to the New-England Conference, having been connected with it for about twenty years, he proceeded to state the reasons for the advice he had given. The assumed irregularities of that Conference had arisen from a wide spread and intense excitement, which had been awakened and kept alive by the combined operation of various causes. He alluded to the passage of the Georgia Conference resolutions, as one of the causes which had contributed to inflame this excitement, and, said he, ‘now you have laid the motion to take exceptions to those resolutions on the table, and if that portion of the preamble is sent out, it may contribute to increase the excitement.’ Wm. A. Smith opposed the views advanced by Bishop Hedding, in quite an inflammatory speech, in which it was thought he misrepresented Bishop Hedding. He said Slavery in the abstract, that is, in a metaphysical sense, had no moral character at all. Before concluding his remarks the Conference was adjourned.

During the afternoon session the report of the Commit-

tee on Itinerancy being under consideration, the motion to strike out all of the preamble relating to the New-England Conference was in order. Mr. Smith proceeded to finish the remarks which he was making at the hour of the adjournment of the morning session. He entered into an extended argument on the subject of Slavery, and attempted to prove that it, is not a moral evil. He was followed by several speakers; and finally, on motion the whole preamble was struck out."

No official condemnation of the course pursued by Abolitionists was put forth, although it was desired by many and expected by more. The language of the Bishop's address evidently invited it. Hear them : " We regret that we are compelled to say that in some of the Northern and Eastern Conferences, in contravention of your Christian and pastoral counsel, the subject, (slavery and its abolition), has been agitated in such forms and in such a spirit as to disturb the peace of the Church."

There was a willingness to condemn Abolitionists shown by the action proposed by the Committees on Slavery and Itinerancy. Hear the report of the Committee on Slavery :

"Whereas, our Church in various places, has been much agitated on the subject of Modern Abolitionism for several years past; and, whereas, it is most desirable to tranquillize these troubled waters, that we may pursue our appropriate calling in peace and harmony, therefore—

Resolved, By the delegates of the several Annual Conferences in General Conference assembled; 1. That it is incompatible with our duty as Christians and Christian ministers to agitate the Church on the above subject, any farther than we may feel ourselves bound to express our individual opinions on proper occasions, in temperate language, with suitable deference and respect for the opinions and character of those from whom we may conscientiously differ. 2. That we highly disapprove of the conduct of those who disturb the peace of the Church by their intemperate and inflammatory speeches and publications, by forming Anti-slavery Societies or Conventions in the Church, and giving them currency by taking the name of Methodists, or by bringing the doctrines of modern abolitionism into Quarterly and Annual Conferences, class, and any

other meetings of devotion. * * * * 3. That it be, and hereby is made the duty of all the Annual Conferences, bishops, presiding elders and preachers, to use their influence to banish the above practices from among us.

Respectfully submitted,
N. BANOS, Chairman."

The most probable reason why some definite action against abolitionism, was not taken, was the degree of excitement and interest associated with the case of Silas Comfort. A full view of this case, including all the action proposed or had on it is worthy of record. It will be referred to hereafter. The facts are these :

Silas Comfort, of the Missouri Conference, was charged with mal-administration for receiving the testimony of a colored person against a white person in a Church trial, although his character passed uncensured. He appealed to the General Conference. Bishop Waugh presented his appeal, May 7. It was laid on the table for the present. On motion of George Peck, May 15, it was called up, and made the order of the day for the next day. The appeal was taken up. George Peck addressed the Conference on behalf of the appellant. The Missouri delegates replied, and Mr. Peck responded. S. G Roszel proposed the following:

"Resolved, That the decision of the Missouri Conference be sustained."

W. Winans offered as a substitute—"That the decision be affirmed; except so much of the decision as passes his character which should be reversed." This was admitted. Before the vote was taken, that part referring to Comfort's character was withdrawn. The simple affirmation of the decision was then negatived. Yeas 46; Nays 65.

The next day, May 18, J. S. Tomlinson moved a reconsideration; but after some discussion withdrew it. I. A. Few then offered the following:

"Resolved, That it is inexpedient and unjustifiable, for any

preacher among us, to permit colored persons to give testimony against white persons, in any State where they are denied that privilege in trials at law." George Peck, D.D., seconded it.

S. G. Roszel offered a substitute, directing preachers in charge in slaveholding States and territories, not to admit such testimony. This was laid on the table, and Ignatius A. Few's resolution was adopted, by a vote of 74 yeas to 46 nays.

On Tuesday P. M., May 26, the vote refusing to affirm the decision of the Missouri Conference, was reconsidered, and it was resolved "That the appeal of Silas Comfort be not entertained," in view of the fact, that no censure or reproof was given him.

J. S. Tomlinson offered a substitute which was laid on the table. It proposed, in addition to the above, to "erase from the journals all the proceedings" in this case, including Few's resolution.

G. Peck then moved to consider Few's resolution. But an adjournment prevented action. Two days after, it was taken up again. W. A. Smith offered, as a substitute, "That the resolution be reconsidered and amended, so that the Annual Conferences may allow such testimony, if they "judge it expedient."

G. Gary offered a substitute for this, which proposed to rescind all the proceedings, except the refusal to entertain the appeal of Comfort, and give annual Conferences authority to determine whether colored testimony should be received or not. This was laid on the table.

The vote was now taken on Smith's motion, to reconsider and amend Ignatius A. Few's, by adopting it again, with the clause added respecting Annual Conferences, allowing or disallowing the testimony of colored persons. The vote was yeas 69, nays 69. Bishop Hedding declined giving the casting vote, so the resolution of I. A. Few was not reconsidered.

The final decision of this case was, in fact, two-fold. First. The General Conference refused to listen to Comfort's appeal.

Second. They declared such conduct as his, unjustifiable and inexpedient.

It is seldom that more words are used to express less ideas, than the following resolutions, presented by Bishop Soule, and adopted by the General Conference, June 2, two days before the Conference adjourned :

"Resolved, 1. That in the decision of this Conference in the case of Rev. Silas Comfort, it is not intended to express, or imply, that the testimony of colored persons against white persons, in Church trials, is either expedient or justifiable, in any of the slaveholding States or Territories, where the civil laws prohibit such testimony in trials at law.

2. That it is not the intention of this Conference in the adoption of the resolution of Rev. Ignatius Few, of Georgia, in regard to the admission of the testimony of colored persons, to prohibit such testimony in Church trials, in any of the States or Territories, where it is the established rule of the Church to admit, and where in the judgment of the Constitutional judicatories of the Church, such testimony may be admitted, with safety to the peace of society, and the best interests of all concerned.

3. That it is not the intention of the Conference in either of the above cases, or in any action had by this body, to express or imply any distrust or want of confidence in the Christian piety and integrity of the numerous body of colored members under our pastoral care, to whom we are bound by the bonds of the gospel of Christ, and for whose spiritual and eternal interests, together with all our fellow men, of every color and in every relation, and condition in life, we will never cease to labor."

The first is unmeaning, and useless. It disclaims what no one would suspect them of. Had they not said it was inexpedient and unjustifiable? Why so gravely and solemnly affirm that they did not mean the opposite?

The second resolution disclaims absolute and universal prohibition of colored testimony, but qualifies the exception in such a manner, that it really makes the action of the Conference look more obnoxious than it appeared without the explanation.

The third was a shameless confession of the "Christian piety and integrity" of their "colored members," whom they had, nevertheless, treated with a degree of contempt, which verbiage cannot gloss over, and no explanations justify.

Not only was it deemed inexpedient and unjustifiable, to receive their testimony against white persons charged with crime but also to allow them to speak for themselves, by a petition, to that General Conference, by whom they had been "stript of the dignity of Christians, degraded in the scale of humanity, and treated as criminals, for no other reason than the color of their skin!"

The following petition was presented to Thomas B. Sargent, and by him given to one of the Bishops. But it was never presented. A copy of it was afterwards published in Zion's Watchman, with a letter from "A colored Baltimorean," June 20, 1840.

"PETITION,

*"From the official members of the Sharp-street and Ashbury colored M. E. Churches, Baltimore,
To the General Conference of the M. E. Church, convened in this city."*

DEAR BRETHREN.—We have learned with profound regret, with unutterable emotion, that your venerable body adopted on the 18th instant, a resolution which substantially declares that it is inexpedient and unjustifiable to admit the testimony of colored persons against the white members of the Church, in those States where colored testimony against white persons, in civil and criminal cases, is illegal.

The adoption of such a resolution, by our highest ecclesiastical judicatory, a judicatory composed of the most experienced, and the wisest brethren in the Church, the choice selection of twenty-eight Annual Conferences, has inflicted, we fear, an irreparable injury upon eighty thousand souls for whom Christ died—souls, which, by this act of your body, have been stript of the dignity of Christians, degraded in the scale of humanity, and treated as criminals, for no other reason than the color of their skin! Your resolution has, in our humble opinion, vir-

tually declared that a mere physical peculiarity, the handy work of our all-wise and benevolent Creator, is *prima facie* evidence of incompetency to tell the truth, or is an unerring indication of unworthiness to bear testimony against a fellow being whose skin is denominated white.

Believing that the adoption of this resolution, by your venerable body, is eminently calculated to foster and strengthen that unholy pride of caste, and those unchristian prejudices which are trampling us in the dust, and marring, as far as they can do it, the ineffaceable traces of the image of God, stamped upon our deathless spirits; believing that the deed you have done, could have originated in that love which works no ill for its neighbor, but in a disposition to propitiate that spirit which is not to be appeased, except through concessions derogatory to the dignity of our holy religion;—knowing that the adoption of this soul-sickening resolution has destroyed the peace and alienated the affections of twenty-five hundred souls, members of the church in this city, but who now feel that they are but spiritual orphans or scattered sheep, who are doomed to wander, if not to perish, having no spiritual shepherd who, they believe, cares for them; we say, being thus impressed, and thus circumstanced, we feel called upon most solemnly to protest against this act of the General Conference, whereby every colored member of the Church is unjustifiably and unnecessarily disfranchised and degraded. We protest against this act of the Conference, because it justifies the wicked and ‘condemns the just,’ and is, consequently, an ‘abomination to the Lord;’ because its tendency is to make one portion of the community proud, haughty, vain-glorious and overbearing; and produces in the other a state of imbibed feeling, which effectually impedes the free course of the gospel among them, when proclaimed by those to whom they have been accustomed to look as their spiritual guides.

Brethren, out of the abundance of the heart we have spoken. Our grievance is before you! If you have any regard for the salvation of the eighty thousand immortal souls committed to your care; if you would not thrust beyond the pale of the church, twenty-five hundred souls in this city, (a few words lost,)—if you would not incur the fearful, the tremendous responsibility, of offending not only one, but many thousands of his ‘little ones;’ we conjure you to wipe from your journal, the odious resolution which is ruining our people.

Brethren, we are led to believe that, could the instigators and supporters of this most exceptionable resolution, only see the evil which its adoption by the Conference has already done—could they witness the heart-rending spectacle of a whole people in sackcloth, they would see cause to go out speedily and weep bitterly. To those of our brethren, from whatever part of the Union they may have come who espoused our cause in the hour of trial, we tender our heart-felt thanks; they have our prayers and our tears, the blessing of the poor, and these we know are not unheeded by the Great Head of the church, who is no respecter of persons.

Finally, brethren, if you expunge from your Conference Journal the resolution in question, we shall be greatly relieved, and shall regard the act as an evidence that you are not unmindful of our spiritual interests. On the contrary, if you, upon a reconsideration of the subject, (for which we pray,) justify the deed you have done, you will, to say the least, render it impossible for us to esteem you very highly in love for your work's sake.

And now, brethren, if in giving you an honest expression of our convictions and feelings, we have, in your view, 'gone forth beyond discretion's mark,' or employed a phraseology savoring of asperity, we beseech you, before you pass judgment upon us, in this respect—(for we wholly disclaim any intention of offending or irritating)—to review the character of the resolution adopted, and its disastrous effects upon our interests and happiness; reflect that we are men, and have all the sensibilities of men; and you will, perhaps, come to a different conclusion, or pass upon us a mitigated sentence.

That the Great Head of the Church may guide you in your deliberations, and conduct you to the best conclusion, is the fervent prayer of your much afflicted brethren."

This addressed was signed by about forty persons.

Among the interesting incidents of the Conference was the case of David Dorchester, Presiding Elder of the New-England Conference, which determined the question of Conference Rights. A brief statement of facts will suffice. He had been charged with mal administration, for refusing to allow the Westfield Quarterly Conference, to pass resolutions against slavery. From this decision he appealed to the General Con-

ference. His appeal was opposed, ably, by Mr. Scott, and others. The decision of the New-England Conference, was, however, reversed : and thus the doctrine of the Bishops and Presiding Elders, was endorsed, that Annual and Quarterly Conferences were bound to submit to the decisions of their Presidents. An able and protracted discussion was had on "Conference Rights," during the few years previous, employing the pens of Bishop Hedding, Dr. Fisk, Dr. Luckey and others, in favor of high toned prerogative ; and Orange Scott, Jotham Horton, C. F. Cox and others, on the opposite side of the question. The decision above named, was rather an expression of what they desired the law to be, than an exposition of the law as it was. For, soon after the action in Mr. Dorchester's case, the Committee on revising the Discipline, reported amendments, declaring it the duty of Bishops and Presiding Elders, "to decide all questions of law." And in a resolution accompanying this, explained the late provision by saying—"The President of an Annual Conference or Quarterly-Meeting Conference, has the right to decline putting any question to vote, when, in his judgment, it does not relate to the proper business of a Conference." Another resolution declares their "right to adjourn the Conferences" when, in their judgment, the proper business is done. The Conferences to have the privilege, only, of "recording their dissent on the journals." The enactment of these laws, prove, that the previous action of Bishops and Presiding Elders, was without law, if not contrary to law, and did not promote the peace of the Church. Its contrary effect will be seen hereafter.

The last item of the proceedings of this body to be noticed, is the action on the memorial of the Stewards and others, of Westmoreland Circuit, Baltimore Conference, complaining of that Conference, for refusing to elect to ordination, local preachers, on the single ground of their being slaveholders. This was referred to a Committee of nine ; Henry B. Bascom, chairman. The report presents a general view of the sub-

ject and concludes with the following resolution, which was adopted:

"Resolved, By the delegates of the several Annual Conferences in General Conference assembled; That, under the provisional exception of the general rule of the Church on the subject of Slavery, the simple holding of slaves, or mere ownership of slave property, in States or Territories, where the laws do not admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom, constitutes no legal barrier to the election or ordination of ministers to the various grades of office known in the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and cannot, therefore, be considered as operating any forfeiture of right in view of such election and ordination."

With this view of its action, these remarks will conclude by a brief recapitulation of some of the doings of the General Conference.

1. The action of the Missouri Conference, declaring the admission of colored testimony mal-administration, was virtually endorsed, by the final action on Comfort's appeal.
2. The color of the skin was made a badge of ecclesiastical degradation, to the reproach of man and the dishonor of God, by the adoption of Few's resolution.
3. The Conference endorsed the sentiment, that Slavery "is not a moral evil," by taking no exception to that declaration of the Georgia Annual Conference, and by refusing to act when special attention was called to that matter, by J. Dodge, of Genesee.
4. It refused even the indirect censure of "advising the Annual Conferences, to "adhere closely to the language of the Discipline, in their action upon this subject in future," by letting the very equivocal report of the Committee on Slavery lie on the table unnoticed.
5. It took away the right of Conferences to act on the subject of Slavery, by giving arbitrary power to the Presidents, whose single "judgment" shall control their entire action.
6. It declared, in the most solemn manner, that "the simple holding of slaves constitutes no legal barrier to the election or or-

dination of ministers to the various grades of office known in the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church," in the circumstances named in the resolution on the Westmoreland memorial.

And in their address to the Wesleyans of England, "all intermeddling with the subject of emancipation" in the Southern States is deprecated as unscriptural and anti-Wesleyan, which is attempted to be proved by reference to 1st Cor. vii : 20, 21, and Richard Watson's instructions to the West India Missionaries.

From this it is not difficult to determine the position of the Church officially, and the facilities afforded to its anti-slavery ministers and members, to carry forward the anti-slavery movement, and restore the primitive character of the denomination. It was a pro-slavery position tenaciously maintained, with the increased embarrassment of the course of those whose anti-slavery path was already very difficult to travel. It is true, that "modern abolitionism" was not formerly condemned, as in 1836, but eighty thousand of those for whom it proposes to act, were shamefully degraded. It is also true that the Pastoral Address did not dare advise the people "wholly to refrain" from the agitation of the subject of slavery, as in 1836, but they did the work far more effectually by empowering the Episcopacy and its agents to suppress all discussion in the official bodies of the Church.

Such was the position of affairs subsequent to May, 1840. During the summer of that year a call was issued, appointing a Methodist Anti-Slavery Convention for Oct. 6th, in the city of New-York. It was issued by Orange Scott, July 20th, as Chairman of a Committee appointed at the Utica Convention for this purpose. The call assigns the pro-slavery doings of the late General Conference—the duty of clearing their "skirts from all participation in the responsibility" thereof, and the restrictions on official action, as reasons for holding a General Convention. The formation of a National Anti-slavery Society, and the disposition of money for missionary and other be-

nevotent purposes, were named as subjects of consideration. And about one month before the Convention met, an able Address was published by Orange Scott, in favor of the objects named above, and urging the formation of a General Anti-Slavery Missionary Society, whose funds should be uncontaminated by the price of blood, "the fruit of theft and robbery," as the contributions of slaveholders were significantly designated.

A very able communication on the same subject, was prepared by Jotham Herton, and offered for publication in Zion's Herald. But it was rejected. An act, on the part of its conductors, indicating, as some thought, a state of mind unfavorable to the anti-slavery movement. They also refused to publish the call itself, until a few days before the time. It was alleged on their behalf that they suspected "other objects than purely abolition, would be urged on the Convention."

A very general interest was manifested in the Convention, and a numerous attendance was the result. It was the largest and best Convention the Methodists ever held. There was more piety, more talent and influence represented in that assembly than could be safely attributed to any one of a similar character, perhaps, heretofore held by them. A delightful spirit of harmony prevailed. The discussions, though animated, were yet dignified, able, and candid.

The appointment of O. Scott to the chair, may be considered a satisfactory intimation as to the estimation which the "great body of Abolitionists in the Methodist E. Church" placed upon the character and labors of that tried friend of God's suffering poor.

More than eighty letters were received by the Convention; some from Churches, with their pastors in the chair; some from Methodist Anti-slavery Societies, and other distinguished friends of the cause, such as Boyd and Smith, of the Pittsburgh Conference, and the venerable Nathan Emery, of the Ohio Conference.

The closing scene was most solemn, and interesting beyond description. Bros. Prindle, Hatch, A. D. Merrill and Dodge, led in prayer. The feeling that pervaded the entire assembly, during that hour, was not soon forgotten.

The results of that Convention came far short of realizing the expectations of its friends. A lethargic spirit soon crept in, and ultimately benumbed the energies of the Abolitionists in the Church. It is true, that an "American Society" was formed. But it did not outlive its first Anniversary meeting. The close of that was the end of its being.

The report adopted on the 21st of the late General Conference, was a brief statement of facts, with a few resolutions, recommending the people, generally, to act, as hitherto, in opposition to Slavery.

The report on the Missionary question, declared the reception of the known fruits of Slavery for missionary purposes, "an insult to humanity, and a deep disgrace to the cause of God;" and having been memorialized, by hundreds of Abolitionists, to devise some plan by which they may contribute to the cause of Missions, so as to "rebuke Slavery," a plan was recommended. But the first dollar was never appropriated as directed, that the writer knows of.

A few weeks after this Convention, the Methodists of Indiana, held a meeting at New-Garden, Wayne Co., Nov. 30th. As their proceedings were brief, and will furnish some of the names of the brethren in that State, who were active Abolitionists, they are here given:

"Agreeably to notice, the Methodist Convention assembled at the Methodist meeting-house, in the town of New-Garden, Wayne Co., Indiana, on the 30th day of November, 1840, for the purpose of forming a Wesleyan Anti-Slavery Society.

The house being called to order, George D. McPherson was nominated Chairman, and Griffin Davis appointed Secretary, pro. tem. The meeting was then opened by reading a portion of scripture, and prayer by Daniel Worth; after which, some

appropriate remarks were made, and the business of the meeting taken up. On motion,

Resolved, That a Committee of three be appointed, to prepare a preamble and constitution.

Resolved, That a Committee of five be appointed, to bring forward names for officers and Executive Committee.

On motion, the Convention adjourned till early candle-lighting this evening.

Evening Session.

The Committee appointed in the forenoon, to bring forward names for officers and Executive Committee, offered the following: For President, Joseph Curtis; Vice-Presidents, Francis Root, James Clayton, and Daniel Worth; Treasurer, Charles Heston; Corresponding Secretary, Griffin Davis; Recording Secretary, Josiah Bell; Executive Committee, James Lovin, William Bundsam, George D. McPherson, John Bands, Robert Milligan, James Starbuck, John Moorman, and John Thomas.

The Constitution was then read and offered for signers, and received, in all, forty-seven subscribers."

The following letter to Bros. Horton and Scott, dated at Fairview, Ohio, July 8, 1840, gives information of progress in that region. The writer, at the time, was a presiding elder in the Pittsburgh Conference.

"I have been very busy since my return from Baltimore, having attended one Camp and seven Quarterly-meetings, and have had no time to write one line in favor of abolitionism, but hope that, 'there is a better day coming.' Abolitionism is gaining rapidly in this country,—in some Quarterly Conferences, in my District, there are abolition majorities where there were very few one year since; and, for the most part, the change has taken place quietly. Our Conference commences in a few days. Heavy threats are made against the Abolitionists; my prayer is, that the Great Head of the Church will enable us, first, and above all, to act righteously, and then prudently; and then I have no fears,—God will take care of the Ark. Yours truly and affectionately,

E. SMITH."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE NEW-ENGLAND CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE, PUBLISHED AT LOWELL—ANTI-SLAVERY MISSIONARY SOCIETY ORGANIZED—ANNIVERSARY MEETING AT ALBANY—WESTERN CONVENTION, CINCINNATI—MICHIGAN MEETING—ACTION OF ROCK RIVER CONFERENCE—UNPROMISING ASPECT OF THE CAUSE—SERIOUS DISAFFECTION BEGINS TO BE MANIFESTED.

THE advantages of free communication with the public, have been seen in the rapid advancement of the anti-slavery cause, especially in New-England; which was mainly attributable to the liberality of the conductors of Zion's Herald, the columns of which were open early and long, to the fullest discussion of Slavery. Some exceptions to this remark must be made, however, in the course pursued in 1840, and onward.

Whether from choice or necessity, is not now affirmed, but it is true, that the writers on anti-slavery selected other channels for addressing the public mind, and very little was published in the Herald, either original or selected. Some complaint being made to the editor, he excused and defended the anti-slavery character of his sheet. The facts here given, and subsequent events in relation to the Herald, led some friends, in Lowell, to think of a new paper.

On the 9th of December, 1846, Abel Stevens assumed the editorial charge of Zion's Herald. In his debut he said:

"On the momentous subject of Slavery, the Herald was early opened by a vote of its managers, for discussion pro and con, with the understanding, however, that the editorial department should be neutral. This, we think, a liberal arrangement, and should satisfy all parties."

The "understanding" here alluded to, had not been under-

stood hitherto, although its introduction in this connection was more clearly comprehended. The publication of the New-England Christian Advocate was soon commenced, L. Lee, editor. It was immediately and vigorously assaulted. In their defence, the publishers say, after applying to the attacks in Zion's Herald :

" We have felt the necessity of a paper in New-England, which shall be decidedly anti-slavery in its character. Zion's Herald is the only one published in New-England, claiming to be Methodistical, which makes any pretensions to abolitionism; and what its abolition character is, may be seen from the following remarks in the debut of the new editor, who has just taken the editorial chair. He says : ' On the momentous question of Slavery, the Herald was early opened, by a vote of its managers, for discussion pro and con, with the understanding, however, that the editorial department should be neutral. This, we think, a liberal arrangement, and should satisfy all parties.' As liberal as the editor supposes this to be, it does not satisfy us, for the following reasons :

1. We wish a paper conducted by some one, who has such views of responsibility as will not allow him to be 'neutral' on a moral question, which he himself acknowledges to be a 'momentous question.'

2. We believe that the times demand a paper, which shall throw its editorial influence in favor of truth, justice, and mercy, 'on the momentous subject of slavery.' A free discussion paper is not enough—it is no more an anti-slavery paper than it is a pro-slavery paper. It is said, the Herald is 'open for discussion pro and con.' This, in plain English, is this : the Herald is open for discussion in favor of slavery and against slavery, with the understanding, that the editor shall be neutral ! it is clear from this, that the Herald, so far as the editor is concerned, and so far as respects the rules under which the managers have placed him, is as much a pro-slavery, as it is an anti-slavery paper. This is liberal indeed ! What a wonder it is, that Abolitionists, who are laboring and praying for the abolition of slavery, will not be satisfied with a paper half 'pro' and half 'con,' on this great question.

The above are some of the reasons which have induced us to

assume the responsibility of publishing the New-England Christian Advocate.

Signed, in behalf of the Laymen's Wesleyan Association.

WILLIAM NORTH,
ROSWELL DOUGLASS,
EDWARD A. RICE,
LEONARD HUNTRESS."

Lowell, Mass., Dec. 17, 1840.

The first No. of the New-England Christian Advocate was issued in Dec., 1840, but dated Jan. 7, 1841, from which time it was regularly issued until March 31, 1842—a period of fifteen months. But it was not supported as its character and object deserved. The publishers were involved in debt by it to a considerable amount.

During the year 1841, several large and important meetings were held by the friends of anti-slavery Methodism. The first was that of the Abolitionists within the Genesee Conference. It was held at Palmyra, N. Y., May 12 and 13. They formed a Conference A. S. Society, auxiliary to the "American," formed at New-York in 1840. J. Heustis, President; P. E. Brown and J. Dodge, Secretaries.

The Missionary question, that was introduced to notice at the New-York Convention, occupied much attention this year. Action in allusion to it, was had by the Michigan Wesleyan A. S. Society, at a meeting held at Ann Arbor, Dec. 31, 1840. The Convention recommended an entire disconnection between the Abolitionists and the Missionary Society of the Methodist E. Church.

The formation of an Anti-Slavery Missionary Society was proposed, and discussed at length among the preachers, during the New-England Conference of 1840. But no action was had, except to appoint a Committee to confer with the Bishops, and ascertain if they would appoint missionaries to be supported by such a society if formed.

A meeting was held in Lowell, Mass., which issued a call for

a Missionary Meeting, to be held in that city, May 16, 1841. Of this meeting, Rev. Jotham Horton was appointed Chairman, and Leonard Huntress, Secretary.

A society was formed. The principal officers of the Society were, Joseph A. Merrill, President; Orange Scott, first Vice-President; Luther Lee, Cor. Secretary, and E. A. Rice-Treasurer.

This important movement did not accomplish any thing worthy of its reputation. The energy of Methodist Abolitionists was not now combined. Various influences had been successfully exerted to scatter their power.

A third important meeting, held this year, was that of the American Wesleyan A. S. Society. Their first and last Anniversary was held at Albany, N. Y., Oct. 6. Cyrus Prindle presided. The formation of the Misionary Society was hailed with joy. Various measures were recommended for the year. The World's Convention for 1843, to meet in London, was approved, and O. Scott and L. R. Sunderland, were appointed delegates. And a Convention, previously called, to meet in Cincinnati, Oct. 20, was, also, sanctioned, and La Roy Sunderland appointed to attend it.

The last-named meeting, was the first great Convention on Slavery, held in the West. Mr. Sunderland was present. From his account will be given a brief sketch of the proceedings.

Cincinnati, Ohio, Oct. 23, 1841.

"DEAR BROTHER:—I seize the first opportunity I have had since the close of our Convention, to give you and the readers of the Watchman, a brief account of its proceedings. Take it all together, it was one of the very best I ever attended. The Rev. Samuel Lewis, an intelligent and influential local preacher, of this city, was chosen President. His address, on taking the chair, was a most able effort in behalf of Right. He addressed the Convention a number of times, and in a manner that would have done honor to Daniel Webster, or any other man in this or any other nation.

One part of our Convention was of a very novel and inter-

esting character. It was, what we called, an 'experience meeting,' held on the second evening, when a number narrated the process of their conversion to the principles and measures of the abolition cause. The real interest of that meeting, it is not in the power of language to describe. Two of the members of the Ohio Conference, attributed their conversion, wholly, or in part, to the speeches of our Br. O. Scott, before the General Conference, in this city, in 1836.

About 150 delegates were in attendance, and some of them from a great distance, (four delegates, only, were residents of this city!) But our meetings were quite full in the evening. Some of the stationed ministers were seen occasionally in the house. Ex-Senator Morris was present; and Mr. Blanchard, Dr. Bailey, Dyer Burgess, and other prominent friends of the cause, stuck by us till the close.

Notices of the Convention were read in the M. E. Churches of the city. This fact is the more surprising, when we know that the prejudice against us, is almost as strong here as in the city of New-York.

The Convention was continued from Wednesday till Friday morning. And, when we consider the number of delegates, the distances from which they came, and the vast region of country represented by them, we must set it down as a great Convention."

Interesting letters were read from several distinguished brethren, among whom may be mentioned, O. Scott, J. Horton, E. Smith, and R. Boyd.

Among other matters of special interest, the subject of a General Convention, to be held prior, or subsequent, to the General Conference of 1844, was acted on. A Committee was appointed to correspond with Abolitionists, generally, and appoint it if judged best. But it was never called. Like other good and great anti-slavery measures, well planned this was neglected and forgotten.

Subsequent to this period, there were several other gatherings. A brief notice of some of these will bring the narrative down to the close of 1842, when a new movement was commenced, the history of which will be reserved for a future and distinct portion of this work.

Early the ensuing year, a meeting was held at Palmyra, N. Y., commencing Jan. 5, 1842, and adjourning to the 19th. An Anti-Slavery Society was formed, auxiliary to the "American Wesleyan." An able address was delivered at each meeting. At the second meeting the following officers were elected: Rev. W. Osband, President; Samuel Moore, M. B. Russell, Rev. S. D. Sherman, and James Seeley, Vice-Presidents; J. K. Cummings, Corresponding Secretary; A. A. Allen, Recording Secretary and Treasurer, and Luther Reeves, Willard Chase, George Wilcox, Durfee Osband, and James Burchard, Managers.

In Michigan, the Wesleyan A. S. Society held its Anniversary, at Ann Arbor, January 12, 1842. The following officers were elected for the coming year: Rev. G. Beckly, of Ann Arbor, President; J. D. Baldwin, of Detroit, Cor. Secretary.

Another meeting was held at Essex, on Burlington District, Feb 15 and 16, by some of the preachers, to consider their "duty as Methodist preachers, in reference to Slavery in our Church." Bishop Isbell was called to the chair, and B. M. Hall, chosen Secretary. In Providence, R. I., also, the Anniversary of the Wesleyan A. S. Society was celebrated in April, of this year. It was addressed by Mr. Horton, then pastor of a church in that city. This was their fourth Anniversary.

During the summer of this year, some of the Methodists, in Illinois, memorialized the Rock River Conference of the M. E. Church. After regretting the existence of Slavery, they say:

"We, therefore, pray you to take some measures to show to us and the world, your abhorrence of this sin, and to appoint special seasons of prayer, for the oppressor and oppressed, to be observed, by the ministers and members of our Church, throughout this Conference."

The memorial was referred to a Committee. Their report was adopted by the Conference. Attached to the report, were several resolutions, declaring it "inexpedient to take any action upon the subject of Slavery."

The action, in different sections of the country, has now been sketched briefly, until we have approached the period of 1842-3. Other meetings were held in different parts of the country. Of these, may be mentioned, the Preachers' Meeting at the several Annual Conferences of New-England, and some others. But the great end, the Reformation of the Church, by the action of its authorized judicatories, did not progress. The old and tried "Watchman" was forsaken almost entirely. The mass of those who had employed their pens in the anti-slavery discussion, had withdrawn from before the public. The columns of Zion's Herald were occupied but little, with articles in any way relating to slavery. During the entire year of 1842, excepting a few of the last numbers, one-third of the papers had nothing on the subject, and the remaining two-thirds had, perhaps, an average of three-fourths of a column each, or 1.32 of the space. For months together, not a line of editorial on the subject of Slavery, appeared in that paper. This will give an idea of the anti-slavery feeling in New-England. In corroboration of this general statement, it may here be remarked, that, Bishop Hedding, in the fall of 1842, said to the Rev. Mr. Bates, "The anti-slavery excitement in the M. E. Church, is at an end. The principles may remain, but the excitement has passed away." This was said in view of resolutions passed by the Genesee Conference.

For two years previous to this time, the aspect of things had appeared, to many good men and true, more and more discouraging. Early in March, 1840, the following sentiments appeared in the Watchman, over the initials of a well-known and talented preacher in the New-England Conference:

"PROSPECTS OF OUR CHURCH."

"Oh! bright and flattering," says the bigoted Methodist. And so one would think from reading the Christian Advocate and Journal. That paper is cruelly and wickedly dumb in relation to the cause of humanity. The editors of the Advocate and Journal will not bark on this subject. Anon, however.

they pounce upon the friends of bleeding humanity and growl, most ominously, because of their praiseworthy efforts to disenthrall the bondmen of our country and our Church ! .

Oh ! Methodism, how hast thou corrupted thyself in an unholy alliance with the American Moloch—‘the sum of all villainies’!

The prospects of Methodism were never more dubious, in this country, than at the present time ! True, we are numerous, influential, and rich ; but, then, the Mother of Abominations has found a refuge within our pale : we have reclined on the adulterous lip of a heartless Delilah until, like Sampson, we are shorn of our strength.

Ichabod ! Ichabod ! flames forth on the walls of our edifice, in characters of unearthly fire ! ‘The glory has departed.’ ‘The prophets prophecy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means ; and my people love to have it so : and what will ye do in the end thereof?’—Jer. v : 31.

Duxbury, Feb., 1840.

J. D. B.

Another, since stationed in Boston, and now in the M. E. Church, writing to Rev. O. Scott, said—

“There appear to be gloomy and dark times to Methodist Abolitionists. The New-England Abolitionists, many of them at least, are led away, as the sons of Israel were, by the daughters of Balak, to commit whoredom with the Moloch of Slavery. Could I communicate my thoughts, as you can, I wouldnt spare.

J. S.

The sentiments, here expressed, may not be entertained now, by the same individuals. But many others felt the same. In Feb., 1841, Orange Scott said, in the Watchman—“I have little hope that the church will ever be reformed in relation to Slavery.” And in the ensuing year, he reiterates the sentiment, in Zion’s Herald of June 15, with a significant statement of the alternative for those who were dissatisfied with the economy of the Church, as developed in the struggle for anti-slavery principles. He says—

“There is, therefore, no alternative but to submit to things pretty much as they are, or secede. I have never yet felt prepared for the latter; how I may feel hereafter, I cannot tell.

But my opinion is, that those who cannot conscientiously submit to Methodist economy and usages, had better peaceably leave. For, 'how can two walk together, except they be agreed?'

Another said—

"I have, for a long time, believed that Abolitionists would do more honor to the cause of God, and exert a more weighty and lasting influence in favor of righteousness, if they should break off from their present ecclesiastical connections, and meet in convention by delegates from the ministry and laity, and organize a Church free from the sin of oppression; embracing in their religious creed, nothing but the essential doctrines of the gospel, and leaving out everything that does not involve the grand scheme of gospel truth. On such a basis, every intelligent Christian could unite, and who can doubt but the pleasure of the Lord would prosper in their hands, and then they might sing—'Let names and sects and parties fall—and Jesus Christ be all in all.'

From yours in the bonds of the gospel of peace,

JOSEPH S. BARRIS."

Monroe, July 25, 1840.

Another letter, in the New-York Watchman, speaks as follows:

"In our own State, there has been quite a large secession and it is on the increase. We hold, that we ought to go together, if we can. If it is the duty of one, it is of another, and of all. We are convinced that, unless something is done, there will be, constantly, small secessions in different parts of the Church.

We are anxious to know our duty in this important step, and we know that, in this inquiry, we are making that, which is made by hundreds in the Church, in this State.

Yours affectionately,

WILLIAM M. SULLIVAN,
VALORUS MEEKER.

Leslie, Mich., March 8, 1842.

Three months later, another writes—

BROTHER SUNDERLAND:—I see by the last Watchman, that you suggest a Convention of Methodist Abolitionists, to consider

what is their duty in present emergencies. This strikes me as the best thing that can now be done. This step should have been taken immediately after the last General Conference, if not before. But better late than never. I have diligently watched the signs of the times, as it respects the progress of abolition in the M. E. Church, for a long time; and there is, in my judgment, no hope of reforming the Church."

After the transfer of the Watchman to E. W. Goodwin, Albany, N. Y., the two letters appeared from which the following extracts are made:

"And now the old question returns again—'What can be done?' Can any man, who has a correct view of this subject, who is a Bible Christian, 'loving God with all his heart,' and 'his neighbor as himself,' 'remembering them who are in bonds as bound with them,' lend his influence to sanction or sustain such iniquity and abomination? And is it possible for a person to be connected with a slaveholding Church, especially if he be a pious, consistent Christian or minister, and not exert an influence in favor of that Church, with all her abominations, whatever they may be? In former years, I have been very much opposed to the idea of Abolitionists leaving the Church—have deeply regretted it when any have done so. But, for a few months past, I have viewed the subject in a different light. Abolitionists are accused of opposing the Church. And so long as the present state of things exist, the Church identified with Slavery—to oppose Slavery is to oppose the Church. Let the Church, then, separate herself from God-dishonoring, soul-crushing slavery, if she does not wish to be opposed by the friends of truth and righteousness. Let her occupy ground which can be sustained by the truly pious and good; or cease to complain of the opposition with which she meets on the subject of Slavery. It appears to me, that the Church ought to be immediately reformed, with regard to the subject of Slavery, or forsaken by every true friend of God and man.

LYNDON KING.

Lisbon, St. Lawrence Co., Sept. 12, 1842.

"The ties that bind me to the M. E. Church are strong—very strong. In the ministry of this Church, I have spent more than twenty years of the best part of my life, during which time, I have formed a large circle of friends. These

twine about my heart; to live and die with whom, I could forego almost anything but principles. And I confess that within the two or three years last past, and particularly within a few months, the struggles which I have endured, with respect to my duty in the present emergency, have given to the society and fellowship of these friends, a temporary preponderance—so that I have felt at times like trying to hope for the best, and submit to things as they are. But my judgment has never fully acquiesced in such an inclination; and, having balanced the whole subject, and well considered the matter in all its relations and bearings, I have come to the conclusion,

1. That the M. E. Church will remain a slaveholding Church, as long as there are slaves in this nation. Of this, I have no manner of doubt. It then follows, that to hold a voluntary and perpetual connection with such a Church, is to be connected in Church fellowship, with what Mr. Wesley calls ‘complicated villany.’

2. I have also come to the conclusion, that so long as men love power, there is no hope of any material modification in our plan of Church government.

We must have, at no distant day, a Church on anti-slavery principles—a Church in which the rights and powers of all shall be promptly secured and balanced. I believe the blessing of heaven would rest on a Church founded on such principles; and there are many in New-England who are anxious for such an organization. Let us, then, all prepare for a general rally in the spring, and separate ourselves, if we have not previously done so, from all connection with Slavery.

AN ITINERANT M. E. PREACHER, (O. Scott.)

October, 1842.

Such was the state of feeling at this period. The occasion of it has been gradually developed in the preceding history, and is most explicitly set forth in the communications just now quoted. A more detailed account of the efforts of ecclesiastical bodies, and individuals in authority, to put down Abolitionists and abolitionism, will give a clearer view of the ground for discouragement so unequivocally expressed.

From remarks, already under the eye of the reader, it is known, that some had given up all hope of redeeming the

Methodist Church, and gone away from her communion. The facts, now before us, are introductory to that result, on a more extended scale; the consideration of which will be deferred until after the ensuing chapter.

CHAPTER XIV.

INDIVIDUAL PROSCRIPTIONS AMONG THE MINISTRY AND LAITY FOR ABOLITION VIEWS AND ACTIONS.

HAVING endeavored to trace out a faithful history of the connexion of the M. E. Church with Slavery—the rise and progress of the anti-slavery sentiment, in different sections of the Church—and, also, present to view, to some extent, the action of the authorities in opposition to this sentiment—I come now to notice a development of the most remarkable character, and almost unparalleled in the history of ecclesiastical proceedings of modern date. Some of the facts, have been glanced at already. A portion have been distinctly noted. But the greater part, thereof, are new, and only just now brought to view, in this history.

Persecution, for opinion's sake, has always been abhorred, as a manifestation of the most malignant sectarian bigotry. And Protestants usually agree, in attaching this stigma to Rome exclusively. The fact of such monopoly is seriously doubted however, by some. And the facts to be noted now, will, perhaps give occasion for strengthening such doubts. They will speak unequivocally.

During the progress of the anti-slavery discussion, it became manifest, to many, that the Church was voluntarily involved in the crime of sustaining Slavery. This criminality proven, ana-

the result would seriously embarrass her peace and temporal prosperity.. And, therefore, the discussion must be suppressed. Such seems to have been the determination of some in authority. The most effectual mode of doing this, was, to declare all interference criminal, and punish the offender, by compelling silence, or by expulsion from the Church. To carry out this purpose, in bringing persons to trial, it was necessary to avoid becoming obnoxious to the indignation of the community, generally. For this reason, the efforts, in some instances, are disguised by plausible modes of expression, in order, more effectually, to accomplish the end designed. These remarks premised, and the reader is prepared to appreciate the following statement, that will be well sustained by ample evidence. It is this: At the General Conference of 1836—by various Annual Conferences subsequently—in different Quarterly Conferences, and by many individual pastors; the most severe and unrelenting course of proscription and persecution, of individual members and ministers, was successfully carried on.

The instances to be noted, were, in some cases, distinguished by a continued series of proscription. The effort having failed in the first instance, was, with some, repeated several times. The incidents extend over a period of several months or years. The execution in other cases, was immediate. The order observed, in each narrative is, to name the instances of proscription, as they were commenced, without regard to the fact, that, in some cases they will extend beyond the period, at which others of a subsequent date, were concluded. Without further remark, the reader's attention is invited to the following instances, under date as they occurred:

CASES OF PROSCRIPTION IN THE MINISTRY.

1836. GEORGE STORRS AND SAMUEL NORRIS.—At the session of the General Conference of this year, held in Cincinnati, Ohio, two members of this body, from the New-Hampshire Annual Conference, attended by invitation, a meeting of

the Cincinnati Anti-Slavery Society. Their names were, George Storrs and Samuel Norris. They spoke a few minutes each. For this, they were publicly rebuked by the Conference. They were declared guilty of "unjustifiable conduct"—with exciting, against that body, "the suspicion and distrust of the community," and disapproved of "in the most unqualified sense." During the discussion preceding this action, the most denunciatory and unchristian language was used towards these brethren. Mr. Payne, of Alabama, declared their conduct "offensive and criminal!" Mr. Levings, of New-York, charged them with "recklessness," and "setting at defiance all admonition." Mr. Young, of Ohio, was "in ordinary cases opposed to harsh language, but the present was a case which, so far from calling for mild and gentle words, ought to be marked with asperity!" Mr. Winans, of Mississippi, said—"There was great indelicacy, great indecorum, great disrespect in their conduct. They merited reprobation." In favor of inserting their names in the resolution, Mr. Smith, of Virginia, said, with sounding emphasis, "Let them be brought forth in all the length and breadth of their damning iniquity!"

ORANGE SCOTT.—At the time to which allusion is made above, the whole question of modern abolitionism was fully canvassed. The two principal speakers were, Mr. Winans, of Mississippi, and Mr. Scott, of Massachusetts. A few days after the discussion, Mr. Scott issued an address, embracing a view of the arguments pro and con. This pamphlet was by vote of the Conference, declared to contain reports, "palpably false"—and affirmed to be "an outrage on the dignity" of the body. The particulars are related in Chapter IX. of this work, His triumphant vindication is there recorded. It is here alluded to for the purpose of introducing to notice, the first of a series of efforts to dishonor and crush Orange Scott. Mr. Winans declared the author of that pamphlet, "a reckless incendiary or non compos mentis"—as having stated "bare-faced, glaring, and palpable falsehoods." And in reply to the

able vindication of Mr. Scott, he said, "I consider the misrepresentations contained in the pamphlet, deliberately false statements, and made with design." And any response to what had been said, he deemed "unbecoming the dignity of the Conference."

This commencement was vigorously followed up. After the adjournment of the Conference a few weeks, Dr. Bangs, in the Advocate and Journal of New-York city, and Methodist Magazine, reiterated the charge of falsehood against Mr. Scott. Several of the preachers, in the district of which he was the Presiding Elder, made application to the Presiding Elder of an adjacent district, to call a council, to investigate the charge, which had gone forth over the length and breadth of the land, in a periodical having a circulation of 25,000 copies weekly. The Author of this allegation was informed of the time at which the Council met, and summoned to appear. He declined, however; but sent a letter, denying that he meant "to charge Rev. O. Scott with the sin of falsehood." The Council met Tuesday, July 12, 1836, at Springfield, Mass. The day following, the New-England Conference commenced its session. On the customary examination of character, when his character was under consideration, a report was presented by a Special Committee, declaring his "veracity unimpeached." The report was accepted without a dissenting voice, and ordered published in the Christian Advocate and Journal, Zion's Herald, and Zion's Watchman.

The next difficulty Mr. Scott had, was at the New-England Conference of 1837, held in Nantucket. During the preceding year he had addressed a series of letters to Bishop Hedding through the public prints, on the subject of Abolitionism, Conference Rights, &c. The course of the Bishop on the question of Slavery was severely censured, and some things were misstated. Under date of June 10, the editor of Zion's Watchman, says—

"Bishop Hedding, having yesterday obtained leave, pro-

ceeded to address the Conference, this morning, in relation to certain letters which had been published in the Watchman, by the Rev. O. Scott, implicating, as he thought, his official conduct, at our last session. He read his remarks from a written manuscript, which took him four hours in the delivery. It was one of the most ingeniously planned, well written, and labored productions we ever heard. He assigned various reasons to justify his course at our last Conference, and showed wherein he thought he had been misrepresented.

Monday morning, June 12th. The Conference granted Bro. Scott the floor this morning, to reply to the address of Bishop Hedding. The Bishop informed the Conference that he should make no reply to Bro. Scott, unless he was misrepresented, and in that case he should only explain and correct. The reply of Bro. Scott, not only went into an examination of the points on which the Bishop conceived he had been misunderstood or misrepresented, but the new views of Episcopal and Conference Rights were discussed with great ability. The speaker went over nearly the whole question of Anti-Slavery, as it is now held by the Abolitionists, and he was, in many parts of his remarks, truly eloquent. A large number of spectators were present with the Conference, who seemed to feel a deep interest in what they heard. He gave way for Bishop Hedding to explain, correct, or defend the position he had taken, more than one hundred times, in the course of his reply."

As an indication of his feelings towards the Bishop, the following extract of a letter, published in Zion's Watchman, after the conference, is here inserted :

"I will only add, that I have now, and always have had, unlimited confidence in Bishop Hedding's moral integrity, purity of motive, and general character, for fair and impartial administration—though we differ, and agree to differ, on the question of Conference rights, and the powers of Bishops. Bishop Hedding and myself, for aught I know, are friends—and he is certainly one of the last men I would knowingly injure.

July 3, 1837.

O. SCOTT."

After this, while attending the Genesee Annual Conference for 1837, Dr. Bangs took occasion, in the course of some remarks, to declare that, "the published account of Brother

Winans' arguments, in the General Conference, was a total misrepresentation." As this was more than ever had been asserted by any one respecting it, Mr. Scott denied it, and challenged the proof. Dr. Bangs replied through Zion's Watchman, and increased the aggravation of his first offence, by declaring that the General Conference "passed a resolution declaring the pamphlet was unqualifiedly false!"—and that they "pronounced the whole pamphlet palpably false." All who have read the facts, as recorded, know that no such sweeping condemnation was put forth by that body.

The above attack was followed by a renewal of the old charge, couched under the assumed form of a "Review of the proceedings of the late General Conference," and published in the Methodist Magazine for January, 1838. In replying to that, Mr. Scott offers a remark that will be appreciated by every candid reader. He says—

"The violence and frequency with which I have been attacked, of late, by Rev. N. Bangs, seems to indicate that, in his opinion, an important object is to be gained by destroying my influence. Repeated and severe attacks have been made upon my character and veracity. Bro. Bangs may think he has a good end in view, but whether the end will justify the means, is a matter of some doubt."

Of the character of the above "Review," an adequate opinion may be formed from the fact that, the editor of a Methodist Episcopal paper, the Pittsburgh Conference Journal, endorses the statements of the reviewer in the following language:

"It is a pity that any circumstances should render it necessary (if indeed necessity can be pleaded.) to treat a brother in the Church with such a heavy hand as Rev. O. Scott is treated in this review. And yet the severity looks more like that of truth and reason, than of wrath."

These efforts were seconded by others. At the session of the Philadelphia Conference for 1838, held in Wilmington, Del., the following unprecedented resolutions were passed without a dissenting voice. The only hesitancy manifested was in the

question of E. Reed, who asked if there was any evidence of the facts alleged. This was replied to by Jas. B. Ayres, who said he had heard them himself. This was sufficient, and the following resolutions were adopted and widely circulated in connection with the printed minutes of that Conference:

"WHEREAS, This Conference has heard with surprise and much regret, that the Rev. O. Scott, of the New-England Conference, and the Rev. G. Storrs, a local preacher, have come within our bounds, and are engaged in delivering lectures on modern abolitionism, and promoting the formation of anti-slavery societies within the Church, and in the prosecution of their objects, they are in the habit of inveighing bitterly against the settled order, usages and Discipline of the M. E. Church, to the great injury and embarrassment of the Church, and to the wounding of her peace. Therefore—

Resolved, That this Conference strongly protest against the conduct of the said O. Scott and G. Storrs, on the subject of modern abolitionism, and the formation of anti-slavery societies within the Church, and with the title of the Church, and that we earnestly exhort our brethren and friends to refrain from any act or deed which may favor the plans and objects of the said Scott and Storrs, and that we also earnestly recommend our brethren and friends to discourage the objects and plans of said Scott and Storrs, on the subject of modern abolitionism, as they tend to disturb the peace and prosperity of the Church within our bounds.

Resolved, That a copy of this protest be forwarded to the New-England Conference, and also to the Presiding Elder of the Oneida District, Oneida Conference, Rev. E. Bowen, Utica, New-York."

Here two ministers of the M. E. Church were publicly arraigned by a Conference to which they were not amenable, and in their absence publicly charged and condemned as guilty of a crime, for which, if really guilty, they were liable to be expelled from the M. E. Church!!!

At the ensuing New-England Conference, the last effort was made against Orange Scott, that we shall have occasion to notice. A list of charges were made out and preferred against him by Bishop Hedding, which, if sustained, would have re-

sulted in his suspension from the ministry. A powerful effort was made, by the Bishop, to secure his conviction. The sympathies of the old men were appealed to by the eloquence, even, of the Bishop's tears. But it was in vain. Orange Scott came out of the trial acquitted of all blame.

During the year ending with June, 1839, he sustained a supernumerary relation, and devoted himself to the advancement of the anti-slavery cause. The two years following, he was stationed in the city of Lowell; and removing thence in 1841 to Newbury, Vermont, became connected with the New-Hampshire Annual Conference. And here, for the present, the narrative will allow him to remain.

LA ROY SUNDERLAND.—As the editor of an ably conducted anti-slavery paper, Zion's Watchman, which, for years, gave forth "a certain sound," to the great confusion of the slaveholding community, this brother became, at an early period, an object of dislike to the haters of abolitionism, who labored to cripple and destroy his influence. Having signed the Appeal to which attention has been directed in a former chapter—the Editor of the Advocate and Journal, in the 451st No. of that paper, said, "One of those whose names appear on the ' ' of signers, has proved himself to be, if not a hot-headed, a . . . t, a warm-hearted, and, we presume to think, rather an injudicious Abolitionist. We mean the Rev. La Roy Sunderland." This public assault, in the official paper, was one of many statements, that seemed to indicate the determination that "The Watchman must be put down. Its editor must be destroyed!" At the General Conference of 1836, Dr. Bangs moved the appointment of a Committee, to inquire as to "where superannuated preachers should be made responsible, when living out of the bounds of the Conference to which they belong." This Committee reported in favor of having them tried by a Council, to be called, by the Presiding Elders, in whose districts they may reside, which Council should have power to suspend until the session of the Annual Conference to which

they belong. This was adopted as a rule, and inserted in the Discipline of the Church. The origination and design of this, may be safely conjectured from the exultation of a minister in New-York city. "Now," said he, "we have got a trap for La Roy Sunderland." Immediately after the General Conference, the New-York Conference held its Annual session, June, 1836. The Zion's Watchman was condemned by an express resolution, pending which, the most violent charges were made by various members, involving the Editor in the crimes of falsehood and slander. The Rev. P. P. Sandford accused him of "publishing profanity"—"slanderizing every minister in the M. E. Church"—"perfect recklessness"—"casting disgrace on every Methodist preacher in the land"—and, finally, declared him "unfit to edit a religious paper, and unworthy the confidence and fellowship of his brethren!" This was followed up by an effort at the New-England Conference, which held its session for the same year, in July, at Springfield, Mass. J. W. Hardy, a member of that Conference, preferred the charge of "Repeated instances of slander or misrepresentation." Dr. Bangs appeared as prosecutor. The evidence adduced, as proof, consisted mainly of the statements made by correspondents, on matters relating solely to the question of Slavery, in connection with the Church, and the sentiments expressed by various persons. Four different votes were taken on the specifications under this charge. One of the particulars specified, was sustained by a vote of 35 to 32. But it was not regarded as supporting the charge. On the question, "Is the charge sustained?" two-thirds voted nay, or 42 to 21. Subsequently, in the absence of the Editor, a resolution was passed by the Conference, declaring that his "writings" had, sometimes, been unguarded, and his statements incorrect, which he was desired to avoid and correct. On inquiry of Bishop Heddle, Mr. Sunderland was informed that the "writings" referred to, were the papers presented on his trial, whether written by himself or others! But there were no errors or mis-statements.

ments pointed out by this resolution. Not one. Hence its passage may be deemed as merely "a tub to the whale!"

The account of this trial was published in the Advocate and Journal, in a manner calculated to do great injustice to Mr. Sunderland. The Virginia Conference Sentinel, of Aug. 19, 1836, published the account with a lengthy article signed "A Methodist." It is only necessary to quote an extract. It says, "He is a malicious slanderer. The lawless accuser of the brethren, maliciously outraging the pious feelings of the whole Church."

At the New-England Conference, held at Nantucket, Mass., June, 1837, Dr. Bangs again appeared as "the accuser" of La Roy Sunderland. The bill of charges is a curious document. It is here quoted entire:

Nantucket, June 8, 1837.

"REV. LE ROY SUNDERLAND, SIR:—I think it my duty to prefer the following charges against you:

1. Slander.

2. Falsehood.

1. Specification of falsehood. In affirming in Zion's Watchman, that at the last New-England Conference you were honorably acquitted from the charge of misrepresentation, preferred against you by J. W. Hardy, and afterwards saying, that you would not have so affirmed, had you known what the Conference had done in that case.

2. Specification. In deceiving Dr. Luckey in a conversation on the same subject.

2. The first specification under this charge, namely, slander, is the published letter in Zion's Watchman, of March 25, 1837, headed 'Methodist Missionary Society in debt'; and in the postscript to that letter, which was not published, which I have in my possession.

The second specification is a mis-statement in Zion's Watchman, of June 3, 1837, of what I said and did in the New-York Conference.

If you acknowledge that you alluded to me in a recent number of your paper, when you said, that a member of the New-York Conference had reported that about the Editor of Zion's Watchman, which he dare not vouch for under his own signature,

then I bring this as another instance of slander. If you say that you did not allude to me," then this falls. N. BANGS."

On these charges, the Dr. labored hard to secure conviction, but in vain. The accused was acquitted triumphantly on every point. In view of the result of this trial, Dr. Bangs proposed, for peace sake, that the Editor should not publish an account of it. This was acceded to. But the very next year, being again arraigned on similar charges before the Conference, Mr. Sunderland published the account, twelve months after date.

At the session held in Boston, June, 1838, charges were preferred, by Bishop Hedding, ugagainst the Editor of Zion's Watchman. A copy is here given:

"THURSDAY AFTERNOON, June 14, 1838.

"Bishop Soule in the Chair. Called up the case of La Roy Sunderland.

Rev. L. R. Sunderland is charged in behalf of the M. E. Church.

1. With treating me in a scurrilous manner.

Specf. 1. In publishing in Zion's Watchman of Oct. 28, 1837, a piece entitled 'What is the difference,' and signed G. Storrs. Specf. 2. In approving said piece, and recommending it to the notice of the reader, in an editorial note, in the same paper, note No. 15. Specf. 3. In publishing to the world, coarse and disrespectful language against me.

2. With publishing against me an injurious falsehood.

Specf. Representing that Southern people made me believe that they sometimes sold slaves so as to part families for their good, &c. See note 1, appended to my letter, published in Zion's Watchman of Dec. 9, 1837.

3. With publishing a false conjecture respecting the Bishops.

Specf. Close of his editorial for Zion's Watchman of June 2, 1838.

4. With reporting a falsehood.

Specf. In a statement made to the meeting of abolition brethren in this city on the 5th inst., respecting the appointment of David Plumb, at the last Conference at New-York.

5. With misrepresentation.

Specf. Prefixing a false title to the second part of my Address, as published in Zion's Watchman, Nov. 25, 1837.

Boston, June 14, 1838.

E. HEDDING."

This trial commenced on the same day and month, that the trial did one year previous. After a tedious trial, the Conference agreed that the Editor had published and approved the article by Geo. Storrs—that he had represented that the Southern people made the Bishop believe that they sold slaves for their good. By voting in the negative on all the other specifications, and on all the charges without exception, the innocence of the editor was fully sustained. But observe. The Conference, in fact, declared that the Bishop's address was "A defence of slaveholding." Such was the title, to which reference is made, in the last charge. The Bishop declared his determination to carry the matter up to the ensuing General Conference. Thus ended this third trial.

The New-York Annual Conference was one of the earliest and most powerful opponents of Mr. Sunderland, as will have been already noticed. At its session for 1839, held in the month of May, in the city of Brooklyn, N. Y., a memorial was prepared against Mr. Sunderland, to be carried up to the New-England Conference. The memorial was prepared by a Committee, appointed by the New-York Conference. They were, Messrs. S. D. Furguson, F. Hodgson, and J. C. Green. It was adopted, and a Committee of two appointed to carry it up, to wit: Dr. N. Bangs and F. Hodgson. The memorial complains of his editorial remarks and other communications, relating to their action as a body, on the agitated subjects of Slavery and Abolitionism. It disclaims all jurisdiction over him, and yet declares his conduct "unbrotherly and unchristian!" It also "regrets" that "the manifest tendency of his course is to injure the cause in which he professes to labor." A most remarkable solicitude is this!

This trial afforded Mr. Sunderland an opportunity to sketch the history of his persecutions in the city of New-York, in a masterly manner. His defence was distinguished by great ability. Want of room only, compels me to pass it, though re-

luctantly. The Committee, to whom the case was referred, reported as their conclusion of the whole matter :

That Rev. La Roy Sunderland be, and he hereby is, acquitted, on the charge preferred against him by the New-York Annual Conference, and, therefore, that his character pass.

ORANGE SCOTT,
J. A. MERRILL,
J. PORTER,
J. HORTON,
T. MERRITT,
J. M. BIDWELL.

Lynn, June 13, 1839.

It need hardly be observed that, this Committee contained men of the greatest ability and celebrity in the Conference. Their unanimous opinion, as above expressed, is an honorable testimony in favor of the defendant.

Within eight months from this time, a complaint was made to the Presiding Elder of the New-York District, by Messrs. B. Goodsel, S. D. Furgason, and C. A. Davis, against Mr. Sunderland, by virtue of the rule adopted in 1836.—(See section 18, page 63, of Discipline published in 1839.) It charged him with “Immoral and unchristian conduct;” alleging various vague and indefinite specifications of “Misrepresentation,” “Deception,” “Vituperation,” “Defamation,” and “Slender.”

The persons aggrieved were numerous and of great influence, including all the preachers stationed in the city of New-York, and those connected with the Book Concern! An array of opposition most formidable. It was, however, ably met, and in the end defeated. The Editor of Zion’s Watchman being informed of the charge by the Presiding Elder, Rev. Daniel Ostrander, replied in an able Protest, showing conclusively : 1st. “That the complaint was indefinite, insufficient and defective. 2d. “That it was contradictory and disagreed with itself.” 3d “That the time laid in the complaint extended beyond the jurisdiction of that court of trial, over any member of an Annual Conference.” 4th. “It charged offences for which the defendant had been tried and acquitted three years before!” 5th

"The Court itself was in violation of the laws of the Church. And, finally, that it was an unscriptural proceeding, and repugnant to the directions of Jesus Christ."

The Presiding Elder admitted the truth of the first, third, and fourth particulars, but the trial went on, although the defendant was not present. One week afterwards, the following letter was received, from the Presiding Elder. It is a unique document!

"Mr. L. R. Sunderland, the following is the report of the Committee on your case, viz. :

New-York, April 2, 1840.

The Committee having assembled for the purpose of reviewing the evidence adduced in support of the above specifications, proceeded to a careful examination of them separately, and decided as follows :

That the 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11th Specifications are sustained. And in view of the whole, the Committee are of opinion that the charge of immoral and unchristian conduct preferred against the Rev. L. R. Sunderland, is clearly and fully sustained by the testimony as above.

FITCH REED,
WILLIAM THACHER,
RICHARD SEAMAN,
E. E. GRISWOLD,
IRA FERRIS.

According to the above verdict, it is my painful duty to suspend you : and I do hereby suspend you from all official services in the Methodist Episcopal Church, until the next session of the New-England Conference, where you must appear for trial.

D. OSTRANDER, P. E. N. Y. Dist."

New-York, April 6, 1840.

At the ensuing session of the New-England Conference, held at Lowell, July, 1840, this whole affair was set aside. But in anticipation of such a result, his opponents made out a new bill of accusations, which was presented by C. A. Davis of the New-York Annual Conference. Among the items, was one, charging him with having slandered the Bishop, who presided at the Conference, Joshua Soule, by saying that every word of a piece of poetry about him was justified. For reasons, most obvious to those who know the veneration felt towards the Bishops of

the M. E. Church, and their power of patronage, Mr. Sunderland was convicted on this specification, and on this alone. The majority was small, and an effort to reconsider the action failed by only one or two votes. Yet the charge of immorality was not sustained. The penalty affixed was, that he should publish the vote of the Conference in Zion's Watchman, without note or comment. This was the last blow aimed at his ecclesiastical life. He withdrew from the traveling ministry at this Conference.

The lines referred to in this case, are given below, with the occasion which called them forth, thus reported by a correspondent in Zion's Watchman :

"Bishop Soule stated in the Pittsburgh Annual Conference of the M. E. Church, during its session at Washington, Pa., July, 1839, that he was not only considered by some of his brethren as a pro-slavery man, but as a slaveholder, also. He said he would take the present occasion to give his views on the subject. He denied being a pro-slavery man or a slaveholder; adding, 'I have nothing to purify my hands of in relation to Slavery, for they are undefiled. I not only never held a slave, but always refused their services as hired servants in my family, or to accept of them as loans, or to permit them, when traveling in slave States, even to clean my boots! Yet you will start,' said he, 'when I tell you, that, when traveling in Georgia, an excellent man, a professor of religion, came to me with tears in his eyes, asking advice in relation to his slaves, and the good brother stated he only waited for my advice to emancipate them, and take them to Ohio, (where I lived,) and purchase lands for them and their children to locate on. I advised him not to liberate them, as they were better with him than in that State, as the laws existed there. I will now conclude with saying,' continued he, 'I have never yet advised the liberation of a slave, and think I never shall!!!'

At the moment of this address of consistency, were pending the proceedings of a sister Conference of the East against Slavery, which had been submitted by that body for the concurrence of the Pittsburgh Annual Conference. It required not a prophet's eye to see the result. The resolution was lost, there being only five votes in the Conference for the exclusion of slaveholders from the Church membership.

TO BISHOP SOULE.

" When day with all its wiles is fled,
 And thou in deep and searching thought,
 Survey'st each act and word thou'st said,
 And each with good or evil fraught—

Mark! Can'st thou then to God appeal,
 And say, thou know'st my hands are clear,
 No slave have I! I've set my seal—
 Nor can oppression 'gainst me bear!

But oh, the heart, by sin deceived,
 Can only see its crimson fade;
 It dims the soul which it received,
 'Till guilt seems pure whate'er its shade.

And thus, mistaken man, art thou,
 In calling thine, clean, holy hands:
 Go, go, repent thou even now,
 For thou hast tightened slav'ry's bands!

Where was thy Bible—where thy mind?
 When truth had fir'd an honest heart,
 To break the yoke, the chain unbind,
 And bid the oppress'd in peace depart?

Yes, they'd have left dark slav'ry's home,
 Tho' he was mild who swayed their lives,
 Nor outcast would he've bid them roam,
 But bought them lands for babes and wives;

Had'st thou not said to him, thou'rt kind,
 They're happier here than in that State,
 Where equal laws they cannot find,
 And slav'ry here's a better fate.

But I would ask, could'st thou secure
 This Christian master length of days?
 Or could'st thou then, their peace insure,
 'Gainst change, should age hedge up his ways?

I'd ask them more in candor, too,
 Would'st thou, tho' treated tender, kind,
 Consent to be a slave, in view
 Of freedom sweet tho' unrefin'd?

What, tho' they had not all their rights,
 Yet might they taste of purest joy;
 For nature's ties would yield delights,
 When slavery could no more annoy.

Let not 'the oppress'd go free' thou'st said,
 And think'st thou ever wilt so speak!
 A bishop thou! as such thou'st sway'd,
 The would-be just, but weakly meek!

Each darken'd mind, each cruel blight,
 From superstition's sombre power,
 Of all those souls, thus robb'd of right,
 Is sin of thine from that fell hour!

Would that the brother had but viewed,
 A bishop as but erring man;
 With soul, perhaps, not all-subdued,
 Or mind that could not justly scan.

Receive this truth—deep, dark thy stain!
 Thy very soul is tinged with blood!
 Go, do thy first works o'er again;
 Go, cleanse thee in the Saviour's flood!

DEBORAH."

LUCIUS C. MATLACK.—The arrangement fixed on compels the introduction of my own experience at this stage of the narrative, it being among the first cases of proscription, which gives it a prominence, from which I shrink and yet cannot consistently avoid.

"In the year 1827 I became connected with the Sabbath School of the Union Methodist Episcopal Church, Philadelphia, being eleven years of age. Five years afterwards I was associated with Daniel Glackin, an experienced teacher, as an assistant in charge of a class in the same Sabbath School. Two years afterwards I was appointed the Superintendent of the lower school, embracing the smaller children of both sexes. Here I employed my time until authorized by the Church to hold public religious meetings, after which my Sabbaths were occupied, for twelve months, visiting the poor and destitute, in the alms-house and suburbs of the city, and endeavoring to instruct them in the truths and consolations of religion.

At the expiration of this time, on application to the proper authorities, license as a Local Preacher was unanimously voted me by the last Quarterly Conference for the Union charge for 1837, signed by John Potts, Presiding Elder of the South Philadelphia District. At the same time, a unanimous recommendation was given me as a suitable person to be received into

the Philadelphia Annual Conference, as a traveling preacher. This was nearly three months previous to the sitting of the Conference.

During that time twelve persons, members of the M. E. Church, met together and formed a Wesleyan Anti-Slavery Society in Philadelphia. This Society I assisted to form, and was appointed its Secretary.

A short time ensued before the sitting of Conference. When my name was announced, Rev. S. Keppler rose and addressed the Conference in a few remarks, highly commendatory, closing with the following significant remark: 'But in justice to Bro. Matlack and this Conference, I am constrained to say, he is a modern Abolitionist.' This announcement was electrical in the effect produced on the Conference. James Smith, Presiding Elder of the North Philadelphia District, assured the Bishop that the Abolitionists were radicals—'and this young man is a radical. These radicals deny your authority and the authority of the General Conference. He has been spoken of as a young man of talents and piety. If he were pious as St. Paul and as talented as an angel, he should never enter this Conference as an Abolitionist if I could prevent it.' To this, James Brooks Ayres responded a hearty amen! Other characteristic remarks were made, some friendly to the person, but none daring to approve the principles of the young man. The case was finally disposed of by a motion to lay it on the table. And there it lays until this day.

Immediately after the adjournment of Conference, the preacher appointed to West Chester, Pennsylvania, the Rev. John Lednum, engaged me to aid him, as he would necessarily be absent for some months from his charge. Thus, was twelve months spent, at the close of which the Philadelphia Conference met in Wilmington, Delaware.

When my name was read, the old objection was started. My presence was called for to make known plainly what my views were on this 'vexed question.' President Durbin was opposed to this, and recommended the appointment of a Committee to confer with me and report what my views were on the subject of Slavery. This was agreed to, and the Rev. President J. P. Durbin, Rev. Charles Pitman, and Rev. Matthew Sorin, were appointed.

After some conversation, a brief report was made out by the Committee and presented to Conference, which stated briefly

that Bro. Matlack acknowledged himself a modern Abolitionist, and approved of the measures of the Abolitionists.

On presenting this report, Rev. C. Pitman declared that although he had supported this brother, 'yet now because of his avowed abolitionism I can no longer stand by him.' After remarks by several in opposition to my reception, the vote was taken, and a unanimous rejection was announced. One of the Presiding Elders then offered a resolution, authorizing my being employed on any district during the year. This was voted by a large majority; many, however, consistently voted against this, arguing that it was manifestly as improper to have me employed by the authority of the Presiding Elder, as by the Annual Conference.

At the Quarterly Conference for the Union charge, Philadelphia, January 10, 1839, after the business of the Conference was attended to, the examination of character was commenced.

They proceeded to canvass the question of my license being renewed, and brought into view—1st. That immediately after my rejection at the Annual Conference, I proceeded to Philadelphia, and attended an Anti-Slavery meeting at which O. Scott lectured, at which meeting I took a prominent seat on the platform. 2d. That soon after Conference, while preaching at West Chester, Pennsylvania, I traveled out of my way in speaking to a text, merely to preach abolition. But it appeared that they would have pardoned all that was past, and taken me into covenant favor, if any assurance of my future good behaviour could be realized, and, therefore, the question was thrown out—'Is Bro. Matlack at present a lecturing agent?' Bro. Pepper answered in the negative. 'Will Bro. Matlack become a lecturing agent in the future?' All seemed to agree that the brother had settled that question by assuring them that he should feel at liberty to lecture whenever requested.

The Presiding Elder added some remarks to what had been said, after which, the question was presented, 'shall this brother's license be renewed?' The vote was taken, and Bros. Pepper and Williams voted in the affirmative, and eight voted in the negative, eight or ten not voting—so the case was disposed of.

After being refused authority to preach, by the Quarterly Conference, I continued to preach, however, when opportunity offered; and believing that the action of the Conference was unconstitutional, I supposed it was only necessary to point it

out to secure redress. Accordingly, I prepared an appeal to the next Quarterly Conference, held April 23, 1839.

This appeal was placed in the hands of the Presiding Elder, and read to the Quarterly Conference, but no mention of it was allowed in the Minutes. The Presiding Elder, Solomon Higgins, decided that this session of the Conference could not reconsider the doings of a previous session. Thus it ended.

Being thus denied my request, having no authority from man to preach, I, nevertheless, continued to exhort sinners to repentance and faith in Christ, in the several large congregations of colored people in the city. For this my pastor, M—— S——, reproved me, as manifesting a disregard of the Church authority, which had determined I should not preach. I justified myself by the 'General Rules,' p. 79, book of discipline, where it is made obligatory upon all to 'do good of every possible sort to all men—to their souls by instructing, reproofing and exhorting all we have any intercourse with.' He 'advised' me to cease my public exercises, as he would be compelled to charge me with insubordination. I promised to think of it, and inform him soon. The next week I informed him more positively, that I was conscience-bound, and felt that 'Woe is me if I preach not the gospel.' I heard nothing more of this matter from him.

It can easily be imagined, by the reader, what my feelings were at this time. I had been trained up in the Methodist E. Church from my infancy. In the city of Philadelphia, I had been connected with the Sabbath School of Union Church, since my tenth year. From the age of 15 to 18, I was engaged as a teacher in the same school. For two years from that period, I was the Superintendent of the Second Division of said School. After this, I was licensed to exhort, and employed my time, for one year on Sabbath's, holding meetings in the suburbs of the city, among the poor, in company with others, who were associated together as a Home Missionary Society. Led on by the indications of Providence—urged from a sense of duty—and encouraged by the counsel and advice of my friends, I looked forward to an entire consecration of my powers to the work of the Christian Ministry, as the great purpose of my being. Many friends had gathered round me. Leading men in the Ministry had proffered their friendship, and a bright path spread itself before me. But all was changed. The Conference refused to receive me—the Quarterly Meeting withheld my

licensee—and my pastor threatened my expulsion from the Church. For these reasons, I now began seriously to contemplate a voluntary exile from home, and friends, to seek a shelter in New-England.

To satisfy any one who might question the truth of my being rejected for anti-slavery opinions, I copy the following letters. The first was prompted by the circulation of unfriendly reports, alleging my rejection by the Philadelphia Annual Conference, for other reasons than my abolition sentiments :

‘ TO PRESIDENT DURBIN.

‘ *Enterprise, Sept. 19, 1838.*

‘ MUCH RESPECTED SIR,—It may seem presumptuous in me to address a communication to you, without previous acquaintance, but the circumstances in which I am placed, will, I trust, be sufficient excuse for my forwardness. It is not necessary to remind you of my case in the P. A. Conference of 1838, as you was Chairman of the Committee appointed to ascertain my views of the principles embraced, as well as the measures pursued by the modern Abolitionists. Subsequent to that interview, and I have supposed, in consequence of some developments made at the time by me, respecting modern Abolitionism, my application for admission was rejected. Some evil disposed persons, however, have more than insinuated that something worse was the real cause of my being rejected, that being the ostensible objection merely.

Presuming that you are acquainted with the real cause of my rejection, and being desirous successfully to repel such insinuations, I have written these lines to request that you would inform me if anything else was laid to my charge, and what ; which will oblige your afflicted, though unworthy brother.’

To this I received the following prompt and satisfactory reply :

‘ *Dickinson College, Sept. 21, 1838.*

‘ SIR—I have received your letter of the 19th inst. I am not sure that I was in Conference when your case was decided. But I am satisfied that I did not hear (or if I did, I do not remember,) anything urged against you, except your connection with abolitionism. I supposed then, and suppose now, that this was the cause why you was not received. If there were other causes, I do not recollect them.

Respectfully,

J. P. DURBIN’

Soon after the Quarterly Conference at which my license was withheld, Bro. H. J. Pepper obtained the signatures of several of the members of the Conference to a declaration that the only reason alleged was my abolitionism, as it was called. He solicited the names of Solomon Higgins, Presiding Elder, and Matthew Sorin, Pastor of the Church. They said the statement was true, but they did not give their names, lest some improper use should be made of the paper.

'Testimonial.'

'The undersigned being members of the Quarterly Meeting Conference of Union Charge, Philadelphia, and being present at the session of said Conference, January 10 1839, when the license of Brother Lucius C. Matlack, as a local preacher was withheld, deem it an act of justice to him to state that, the only alleged cause for withholding his license, was his having delivered public lectures in support of 'Modern Abolitionism,' with his avowed intention to deliver such lectures as occasion might offer, and being in favor of getting up Anti-Slavery Societies in the Church.

W.M. WILLIAMS, Local Preacher.

A. LUDINGTON, " "

THOMAS TAYLOR, Leader.

HENRY J. PEPPER, "

SAM'L Y. MONROE, "

MITCHELL BENNIS, "

THOS. K. PETERSON " "

Philadelphia, May 29, 1839.

CHARLES K. TRUE.—At the New-York Conference held May, 1837, this brother was elected to elder's orders. The vote was reconsidered, however, and his having read an address on Slavery, to his people, at Middletown, Conn., from the pen of the venerable Timothy Merritt, was urged by Dr. Bangs, H. Bangs, P. P. Sandford, J. Kennedy, L. Clarke, and others, as a reason for denying him elder's orders. But their efforts failed. After their consuming nearly all of one day, in discussion, he was elected by a large majority.

The next year, (1838,) he was arrested on the charge of "Contumacy and Insubordination." This was affirmed in

three specifications. 1. Violation of his pledge on Slavery at the last Conference. 2. Aiding in the publication of an anti-slavery tract. 3. Attending an Anti-Slavery Convention at Utica. Luther Lee, of the Black River Conference, was his counsel. The trial continued two days, and resulted in the suspension of Mr. True from all the functions of a gospel minister, by a vote of 91 to 37. He appealed to the next General Conference. This was on Tuesday, May 29. The next day, however, he sent in to the Conference a pledge, to abide by its decisions on the subject of Slavery, and refrain from such actions as it would forbid, and the suspension was taken off. Not, however, until he had promised to withdraw from the American Anti-Slavery Society.

1838. JAMES FLOY, (now D.D.)—At the session of the Conference just now referred to, this brother was arrested on the same charge and similar specifications. He had acted publicly against Slavery, and attended an Anti-Slavery Convention. He was found guilty of “Contumacy and Insubordination,” by a vote of 124 to 17. In favor of suspending him from the exercise of his functions as a deacon in the Church, the vote stood 102 for, to 31 against. So he was suspended. The next day, however, he also pledged himself to abide the decisions of his Conference on the subject of Slavery, and the suspension was taken off, by a vote of 127 to 1.

PAUL R. BROWN.—This brother was arraigned at the same time with the above, on the same charge, for attending the Utica Convention. Before the Committee, he manfully asserted his purpose, to do all he could, to oppose Slavery and promote Abolitionism. They reported in his case that, “he be required to refrain wholly from this agitating subject—he reprobated by the Bishop—and not appointed preacher in charge,” but in a subordinate station, with some one over him. This

was adopted. He made a noble defence, sketching fully the pro-slavery action of various Conferences and leading men, as a good and sufficient reason for holding Anti-Slavery Conventions in the Church ; and in justification of his attendance, and co-operation with them. He concluded his remarks in the following dignified and christian manner.

"I have taken my stand, and cannot go back—I am not ambitious—I feel it a solemn duty. I must stand, if alone, and all the world against me—I can bear to be censured—it may do me good—I am willing to be admonished by any one, anywhere. And as to the charge of a circuit, or station, I do not wish it, I never felt worthy of it, and think wiser and better men should be placed there. It would be quite a relief to me. But as for pledging not to discuss the subject, I never can do it. If you think you must censure, or suspend, or expel me, why, you must take your course, and I must bear it. But I feel it my duty to plead for the slave, and I must have the liberty !"

He was publicly rebuked. The appointment of this noble-hearted brother, given by the Bishop, was, in a distant field of labor, where he suffered much inconvenience and many privations. And all for being honest, and opposed to slaveholding.

DAVID PLUMB.—The same charge was made against this brother. The acts specified were—Attending a State Anti-Slavery Convention, and by other means agitating this subject. He, too, was suspended from the ministry, by a vote of 79 to 37. The day following, he pledged himself to abide by the decision of the Conference, while he was a member of it. The suspension was then removed. He asked a location. This was refused.

At the New-York Conference for 1830, although he had withdrawn from that body, and united with the Church again on probation, he was charged with not filling his appointment, and violating his pledge. Suspension was again formally voted

in his case, although he was beyond their jurisdiction. Such was the zeal against abolitionism with which they were eaten up !

Several other individuals were arraigned and censured by the same Conference. One applicant for elder's orders, Professor Huber, of Middletown University, was rejected. A brother, named Young, was not received on trial, because of his abolition views. But without further remarks on the doings of this body, I will proceed to notice similar movements in other Conferences.

J. S. BARRIS.—At the Erie Conference for 1838, the following criminal (?) accusation was laid against this brother, who was at this time a presiding elder. The account annexed, was published in Zion's Watchman of September 1, 1838, over the signature of Benjamin K. Maltby, of Ashtabula, Ohio. It furnishes another specimen of the frivolous character of the charges against Abolitionists. This attack, however, was only productive of "regret" on the part of the Conference, and "admonition" from the Bishop.

His case came up on Monday 13th inst., and was laid over. Tuesday it was called up again, and the following charges were read :

"Charges preferred against the Rev. J. S. Barris, of the Erie Annual Conference, to wit : charge of insubordination to the constituted authorities of the M. E. Church.

Specf. 1. Disobedience to the advice of the General Conference, in lecturing and agitating the subject of abolition during the past year.

Specf. 2. Contempt of this Conference, by getting up and presiding in an abolition meeting on the 9th inst.,—and delivering an abolition lecture under pretence of preaching a gospel sermon ; delivered in the Presbyterian Church, in this place, on Sabbath eve last.

Specf. 3. In giving leave to the pastor in charge of N. Castle Ct., to attend the Abolition Convention, held in Utica, May last. In behalf of the Church. Dated, Painesville, Aug. 13, 1838.'

Testimony was called, when it appeared that Brother Barris had introduced the subject of Slavery into a sermon or two—and replied to a Dr. Howe, whose business in his district was to make the people believe that Slavery was a divine institution and in accordance with the word of God. Here Bro. Barris took his stand upon his ordination vows, which required him ‘with a ready mind to drive away erroneous and strange doctrines.’ As to the advice of the General Conference, he stood upon the clause of directions to those who ‘must speak out,’ &c., as applicable to him, and which he had endeavored to obey. His ‘lecture under pretence of a gospel sermon,’ was one on the responsibilities of man to his God. He had touched upon Slavery under the head of duty of ministers to oppose sin in all its forms, wherein he argued that sin though in ‘high places’ sanctioned by law, mingling in the politics of the country, and an opposition to it, attended with excitement, should by no means form an exception. His character at length passed, under a resolution expressing the regret of Conference at his course, and giving him up to the Bishop presiding, to be admonished, and requested to desist from such conduct ‘in future.’

BENJAMIN PRESTON.—This brother was arraigned the day before the Conference adjourned, upon the following charges, found guilty and suspended for one year from his ministerial office !

“ 1. For saying that the proceedings of the New-York Conference at its late session were unrighteous, and unjust, and equal to a Roman Inquisition, and would as lief see the persecution under the reign of Queen Mary revived, as such proceedings; and that the devil was at the bottom of it.

2. For saying, that in reference to his abolition sentiments, he would lecture as much as he pleased, and circulate Zion’s Watchman as much as he could, and the Conference might help itself if it could.

3. For making exertions in favor of an abolition meeting in Monroe village, to the injury of the Methodist Society in that place, although earnestly requested not to do so.

4. For desecrating the Sabbath by delivering abolition lectures thereon.

In behalf of the Church..

JOHN BAIN.”

I here insert another extract from the letter of Bro. Maltby above named. After speaking of a resolution, adopted by the Erie Conference, forbidding abolition lectures, conventions, &c., he says :

" The day following came on the examination of candidates for admission to membership. The use to be made of this resolution now began to appear. A majority of the candidates were abolitionists. When these came up for examination, no objections appearing against them, they were called out before Conference to tell what were their views of the resolution, and whether they were willing to be governed by it. This point was a trying one to the young men. They had gone through the period of probation assigned by our economy. They had looked forward to this as the time when they should be consecrated to the high vocation of feeding the flock of Christ, and of coming also into a more immediate association with their brethren in the Conference. But before them now arose a resolution denominated a law of the Conference by which they were to govern their future conduct, in regard to a great moral evil. I say nothing of the sacrifice it required at their hands, or of its intrusion to the sanctuary of conscience; or its conflict with their sense of obligation to God in this matter. The resolution is before the public, the reader may judge for himself.

A number of the candidates refused to pledge themselves to accept this resolution as the outline of their future conduct. The consequence was, they were refused admission. Some of those who came after the fixed determination of the majority, in regard to the crime of refusing the pledge was fully manifested, thought it prudent to consent to be governed by it as a Conference rule, hoping soon to see themselves free from the restraint of such a resolution. There was, afterwards, a reconsideration of the cases of some. One gave satisfaction to Conference in reference to the resolution, and was admitted. Three remain rejected from membership, two of which are continued on trial."

1839. GOODWILL BUCKINGHAM.—At the Pittsburgh Conference for 1838, the following resolution was adopted, which

was made the basis of proscription in the case of the above named brother :

"Resolved, That while this Conference disclaims all intention of interfering with any man's private opinions ; and while, as the Discipline says, 'we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of Slavery,' we judge it incompatible with the duties and obligations of Methodist preachers, to spend their time in delivering abolition lectures, contributing to the getting up of abolition meetings, attending abolition conventions, or in circulating abolition papers.

The extract given below, is from the pen of Robert Boyd, a worthy member of the Pittsburgh Conference, and one of its delegates in the General Conference of 1844 at New-York. The letter was dated July 30, 1839, Barnesville, Ohio, and published in Zion's Watchman for August 17, of the same year.

" Such was the nature of a part of the business, which it was understood, would come before the Conference that many were extremely anxious to witness the result. I refer to the subject of Slavery. This came up first, when Bishop Soule laid the resolution of the New-England Conference before us ; and again in connection with the case of Brother Goodsill Buckingham, (a probationer,) who had delivered two lectures on the subject of Abolitionism during the past year. While the case of Bro. B. was before the Conference, a doubt was expressed whether a majority would entertain the resolution of the last Conference on the subject of Abolitionism, with the construction which the mover had put upon it, in a letter written to another member of the Conference during the past year. It was, therefore, moved and carried that the further consideration of Bro. B.'s case be laid over, to make room for a reaction on the resolution of last year. Whereupon, it was moved to rescind the resolution.

Before the vote was taken on this motion, the construction of the mover, above referred to, was read, which went to say that, the delivery of even a single lecture, in the course of a year, under any circumstances, or even lending an abolition book or paper, was a violation of the resolution : and, further, that a brother thus offending, after being admonished of the

error of his way, and borne with for a season, could have 'no more place among us as a traveling Methodist preacher.' With this construction and understanding of the resolution, the vote was taken to rescind it, and the motion was lost; 24 voting for rescinding, and 58 against it. After this action upon the resolution of last year, Bro. Buckingham's case was again taken up, and he was permitted to address the Conference. And such was his self-possession and truly amiable manner, as to form the most striking contrast with his principal warm blustering opposers. In short, such was the ability and amiableness manifested on this occasion, that even his warmest opposers felt and admitted that he was no ordinary man. But he was firm to his purpose, and nobly refused to pledge himself 'wholly to refrain' from the agitating subject. Hence he was dropped, 29 voting for, and 49 against his continuance.

The amount of the matter is simply this: viewing his case apart from the resolution, he appeared before the Conference as one not only passable, but one most to be desired. He was presented by his elder and colleague, as deeply pious, habitually serious, greatly devoted to his work, and possessing far more than ordinary talent and education, and exceedingly anxious to continue and give himself wholly to God and his work. Thus, we see, one, every way qualified, according to the Bible and our discipline, cut off by the power of a resolution that was made after he gave himself to the Conference!"

EZEKIEL ROBINSON.—This worthy man was one of the Presiding Elders in the Maine Annual Conference. Being deeply interested in the anti-slavery cause, he attended, among other public meetings, on that subject, the Convention in 1839, at Utica, N. Y. He was one of a committee to call another convention. At the session of the Annual Conference for that year, he was deposed from his office, because of his connection with the abolition cause. The fact is thus stated in Zion's Watchman, some time subsequent to the occurrence :

" We have never alluded, we believe, to the fact that Bishop Waugh removed our brother, E. Robinson, from his district for reasons connected with the abolition cause. We are told that one reason assigned by Bishop Waugh was, that Bro. Robinson

was one of the committee for calling another convention. Bro. R. assured the Bishop, at the time, that he was not in favor of holding another convention before the next General Conference, though he believed in our right to hold one if we chose to do so; and he further informed him, that it was his design to oppose the holding of the proposed convention, and probably he would have done it, had it not been postponed, as all our readers know. Yet he was deposed from his eldership.

How will these facts sound in the ears of posterity a hundred years hence?"

This statement is fully corroborated by a member of the Maine Conference, (since of the New-England Conference,) in a letter, found in Zion's Watchman, of Sept. 7, 1839; the following is an extract:

"The great cause of God and humanity still advances among us: neither 'tribulation, nor distress, nor persecution,' can check its glorious career. The removal of Rev. E. Robinson from his office of Presiding Elder for his 'peculiar sentiments,' alias his abolitionism, is making more converts to this cause, than Bro. R. could have done by taking an abolition agency. Had the superintendent appointed him to such an agency, he could not have disturbed the peace of the Church more than he has done, by the unprecedented act of cashiering a man for opinion's sake. Alas! who will answer for this?

Newcastle, Me., July 26, 1839.

M. TRAFTON.

HENRY V. DEGEN.—The following letter presents the facts of a peculiarly interesting case of proscription by the Book Concern Agents:

"New-York, Oct. 29, 1839."

"Rev. O. Scott,

DEAR BROTHER,—Though personally unacquainted, I take the liberty, at the instance of Bro. Sunderland, to address to you the present communication.

I have been employed in our Book Concern for the past five years—two of which have been spent in the Advocate Office, and the last three, as General Book-keeper. I believe, that, during that time, I have given satisfaction to the Agents, both in

regard to my behaviour and fidelity. It has been, however, my misfortune (as far as my wordly interests are concerned), to be an Abolitionist—and as such, especially of late, have excited the suspicion and prejudice of my employers. Sensible, however, of the peculiarity of my situation, I have endeavored to exercise strict prudence in all my movements—and until late, all my opponents have in vain sought for any opportunity to bring ought to my charge.

At a Centenary Meeting, held in the Church to which I am attached, the brother who was appointed Secretary (one of the trustees,) rose and stated that he felt it a duty to divide his Centennial Offering between the objects proposed by Conference and the Anti-Slavery cause. Knowing that a number of our brethren (the majority being Abolitionists,) had come to the meeting with the same intention, I rose and asked whether it would be considered out of order, for the Secretary to take down, on a separate sheet of paper (apart from the minutes of the meeting,) the amount which might be subscribed for this object. To this, the preacher in charge, Bro. Tackaberry, put his veto—and nothing more was said on the subject, until towards the close of the meeting, when, fearing, that my example, in not giving anything, might be misconstrued, and have an unfavorable influence on others, I again rose, and stated, that I highly approved of the proposed objects, but feeling that my circumstances would not admit of my doing much, and believing myself in duty bound to do something for the slave, I had come to the conclusion to give my offering that way.

For this procedure, without any previous intimation of the same, I had, at our next ensuing Leaders' Meeting, my class-book demanded of me. The members connected with my class, feeling themselves aggrieved, called a meeting, at which they expressed their unqualified disapprobation—and appointed a Committee to have the statements which I had made before the class, in Bro. Tackaberry's presence, printed and circulated. This document (a copy of which I now send you,) was printed, though at my request not circulated.

In addition to the above punishment, such a prejudice was excited in the minds of our city preachers, that, though previously, scarce a week passed without some invitation to preach on the ensuing Sabbath, I have since been carefully avoided. And to cap the climax, the Agents, on last Saturday evening, gave me my dismissal—at the same time, refusing to assign any

other reason than, that they were displeased with my late conduct.

Under these circumstances, I have been advised to apply to you—with a request that, you would use your influence, either in obtaining me some situation in your region of country—or in enabling me to travel under the Presiding Elder on some circuit, until the N. England Conference, when I shall probably join it.

You will find subjoined below, a few lines from Bro. Floy, of the New-York Conference, who was my pastor for two years, and intimately acquainted with me. And, also, Bro. Sunderland, who has also been more or less acquainted with me for a few years past.

Affectionately yours in Christ,

HENRY V. DEGEN."

" During the two years that I labored on the Harlem Mission, Brother Degen filled the offices of Superintendent of the Sabbath School, Class Leader, and Local Preacher, with great acceptance. His labors among that people, have been greatly blest in the awakening of sinners and the upbuilding of believers. His preaching talents are good, and from my knowledge of his daily conduct and conversation, I think he would make a good pastor.

JAMES FLOY,

New-York, Oct. 29, 1839.

N. Y. Conf.

P. S. Bro. Degen was recommended to the N. Y. Annual Conference, as a suitable person to join said body, by the Quarterly Conference of Harlem Mission last year; but of his own accord, withdrew his recommendation.

J. F.

DEAR BROTHER SCOTT—I pity Bro. Degen. He never scarcely dared to open his lips for the slave, and the Book Agents have dismissed him, out of mere hatred to abolition.

Yours, LA ROY SUNDERLAND.

WILLIAM M. SULLIVAN—Had been a traveling minister, but had been located within the bounds of the Ingham Mission, Michigan Conference. As editor of the Michigan Freeman, he had commented upon the proceedings of that Conference, in refusing to ordain Marcus Swift and Samuel Bebbins. The following is a copy, verbatim et literatim, of a list of charges and specifications :

“ *Leslie*, July 1, 1840.

“ Rev. W. M. Sullivan, you are hereby notified to attend at my shanty, or such other place as may be agreed upon, in the village of Leslie, Ingham county, on Thursday, the 16th of July, 1840, at 10 A. M. to answer the following charges and specifications preferred against you in behalf of the Methodist E. Church. A Committee will be called to hear and investigate the case.

Isaac Bennet. P. in charge.

Charge 1st. For publishing in Michigan Freeman, of Dec. 25th, 1839, falsehood in regard to the doings of the last Michigan Conference.

Specification 1st. Founded on the clause in said publication ‘to lessen his (swifts) influence.’

Specification 2d. on the clause, ‘and as an omen,’ &c.

Charge 2nd. for slandering the Michigan conference in the above named communication.

Specification 1st. In denominating the Michigan conference ‘pro-slavery.’

Specification 2d. In representing the conference as ‘refusing swift ordination for a base purpose (or purposes) after he had fully complied with all disciplinary requirements.’

Specification 3d. In applying the terms, ‘slaveholding power’ and ‘gag monster’ to the Michigan conference.

Specification 3rd. founded on the item, item ‘sacrificing the man,’ &c.

Specification 5th. founded on the item ‘had not the iron rod,’ &c.

Specification 6. founded on the sentence so it is ‘the wrath of man is made to praise god.’ ”

The time of the trial was altered; and, then, the charges were withdrawn. Not, however, until the utmost efforts had been made, in vain, by Rev. Loring Grant and Rev. E. H. Pilcher.

JOHN WATSON, was a traveling preacher nine years, and until 1840, was connected with the Oneida Conference of the M. E. Church.

His experience will be given in his own words, showing the influence exerted against him, on account of abolitionism:

“ At the last session of the Oneida Conference, (at Norwich,

N. Y., Aug., 1839,) the Presiding Elder of the Cayuga district, in the bounds of which I had labored for some years, repeatedly urged me to give him a pledge, that I would not discuss the subject of Slavery in the pulpit. And, when my name was called to pass my character, he said there was nothing against my moral, or Christian character, but wished my case laid over, which was done. Shortly after, the Presiding Elder beckoned me to go out, and also another preacher who had informed him, that I had given much offense to the people of Amber, by preaching a very warm abolition sermon in that place. But after a little investigation, I showed that, notwithstanding all the labor of this mountain, it only brought forth a pro-slavery mouse. One man had been offended, and one, too, who had opposed all the movements of the friends of temperance in that place. And I presume, sir, you will conclude, that he is but a sorry Abolitionist who will not displease, at least, one man in a year.

After going out as above mentioned, the subject of giving a pledge was again renewed, and I was now informed that the stationing Committee wanted it from me, and that there was no place in the Cayuga district, where the people would submit to have the subject of Slavery discussed in the pulpit. The following short dialogue then took place, after which, nothing more was said to me about giving a pledge :

' What did the framers of our discipline mean, when they asked, ' what shall be done for the extirpation of the great evil of Slavery ? ' Did they mean that slavery was a great moral evil ? '

' They did !'

' Is a great moral evil a great sin ?'

' It is !'

' And shall I give you, or the Conference, a pledge, that I will not preach against a great sin ? '

' I expect that the General Conference will give more latitude upon that subject !!!'

' The above is, I believe, verbatim. From which it appears, that, until the General Conference, I can be allowed to preach against little sins, and if that august body shall see fit, in their clemency, to grant the indulgence, I may, hereafter, be permitted to preach against greater sins ! ' Roll round ye wheels of time and bring the welcome day,' when presiding elders and conferences will no longer oppress men, to hinder them from

preaching against the worst of villainy. What the next requirement will be I know not; perhaps something like that in Acts iv. 18—‘ And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all, nor teach in the name of Jesus.’

At the time of Conference, I had but partially recovered from a severe attack of pleurisy and inflammation of the lungs. Before that time, I never gave intimation that I needed some favor to be shown me, on account of my health. Well, I was appointed to Spencer—allowed to be one of the most laborious and difficult to travel, of any circuit in the Conference—and having eleven appointments for one man. I commenced my labors on the charge, the second Sabbath after Conference, and after many difficulties and disappointments, at last got my family to the village of Spencer, Tioga Co., where, after coming a journey of about eighty miles, one man sent us a candle, and this was the provision for that night, for myself, wife, and four children. There was no place to buy any bread in the village, and I was ashamed to beg. The next day, however, it began to be more encouraging, for one of the stewards (there being two in the place,) sent us a bushel of potatoes, and some slabs for fire wood, this being Saturday, and my family now provided for, I was prepared to preach to three congregations on Sunday. Yet, ‘none of these things move me.’ As a Wesleyan Methodist, ‘I absolutely deny all slaveholding to be consistent with any degree of natural justice;’ and shall not shun to declare that Slavery is sin under all circumstances

Respectfully yours,

JOHN WATSON

Fayetteville, N. Y., Sept. 30, 1840.

EDWARD SMITH, was a traveling preacher in the Baltimore Conference, and subsequently a Presiding Elder in the Pittsburgh Conference of the M. E. Church. During the year 1839, he became known as an active and efficient Abolitionist in Western Pennsylvania. He had been solicited, by the Wesleyan Anti-Slavery Society, the American Anti-Slavery Society, and the Ohio State Society, to devote his time wholly to lectures on that subject, for which a liberal salary would have been given to him. But he was so devoted to his work, as a Methodist preacher, that he declined these offers. Indeed, he

had, for the same reasons, declined a nomination to Congress, when offered to him by a party then in the majority.

Yet he was not inactive as an Abolitionist—lecturing and debating publicly on the subject, and to the utmost of his distinguished abilities, promoting the cause of the slave. His success in the gospel ministry was very great. Thousands professed conversion to Christianity as the fruit of his labor, and many persons now in the gospel ministry, regard him as their spiritual father. Such is the report of those who know him.

In 1838, a resolution was adopted by the Pittsburgh Conference, prohibiting the preachers attending conventions, delivering lectures, or circulating papers of an anti-slavery character. This was construed to mean, that a preacher was liable to expulsion for even lending an abolition book or paper. (See R. Boyd's letter on Buckingham's case.) With this construction it was re-affirmed in 1839, and a preacher was cut off for violating it. Subsequent to this, E. Smith had written several able communications for the Watchman, condemning this resolution, and criticising the action of the General Conference. This called out an attack from Dr. Bond, who assailed his veracity and general reputation. These were refuted by the reply of Robert Boyd, who cited facts positively contradictory.

What communications passed between New-York and Pittsburgh, if any, is not known. This only, is significant. Within twelve months from the assault just named, Edward Smith was arraigned before the Pittsburgh Conference, on a bill of seven distinct charges. The number of offences laid to his charge, was evidently designed to cover the palpability that abolitionism was the head and front of his offending.

An indecent haste was manifested, by the "chief men," to decide the case summarily, by dispensing with the usual forms of trial. The decision of the Bishop secured a reference to a Committee, before whom the list of charges was so thoroughly sifted by the accused, that two only withstood the ordeal. It is only necessary to name them.

First. Giving "publicity to things respecting the Methodist Episcopal Church" and "the ministry, which are highly slanderous in their character."

Second. Declaring that he "would not take an appointment in Virginia, if the Bishop were to send (him) there—thus encouraging a spirit of rebellion in others, and violating (his) own ordination vows."

The prosecutor was Presiding Elder of the District, and had written to the accused an admonitory letter, of which the following is a copy :

"September 9, 1840.

"DEAR BROTHER :—A sense of duty only induces me to drop you these lines, and whatever may be their reception or fate, I assure you they are well intended.

Complaints have been made to me that you have, in one instance, at least, delivered an abolition lecture, or preached an abolition sermon ; and that you had made an appointment to deliver another in a short time. As a friend, I advertise you of the fact, that such movements give dissatisfaction to many of the members of the Church ; and I advise you to discontinue them. As it is not a matter that constitutes any part of the appropriate work of a Methodist preacher, it can be dispensed with, without infringing the rights of any. The resolution of the Conference upon that subject, which you helped to frame and pass, should have been rescinded before you, of all men in the Conference, became an abolition lecturer.

Respectfully,

Rev. E. Smith.

R. HOPKINS."

This was replied to thus

"New-Athens, September 11, 1840.

"DEAR BROTHER :—Yours of the 9th inst. is now before me. You inform me that complaints have been made to you, that I have delivered one lecture, or preached one sermon on abolitionism, and that I had made an appointment for another lecture. The first is true : I have delivered one lecture ; but had not, at the time I supposed you received your information, made an appointment for another. But I have no disposition to conceal the fact, that I intend to promote the interests of abolition in every way I can, without neglecting my work. I intend to

lecture, circulate books and papers, and do the very best I can for the cause of abolition and the oppressed. This I feel to be my duty, in connection with attending faithfully to the duties of my circuit; and if I hurt the feelings of my brethren, or 'give great dissatisfaction to many of the members of the church,' I cannot help it. I must, and will, take my conscience into my own keeping. As to the resolution of our Conference, you will see my views of it in the last 'Watchman.'

I have carefully and prayerfully looked at this subject, and have come to the conclusion, that the above course is the way of duty, and trusting in God, I intend to pursue it.

Yours affectionately, E. SMITH."

Rev. R. Hopkins.

The accused defended himself, by showing the truth of all he had ever said about slavery in the M. E. Church. For these were the "things" referred to in the first charge.

After speeches from Dr. Elliott and Charles Cook, the first arguing that the Church was anti-slavery, and the last lauding the church and the bishops, the vote was taken, and the following resolution, offered by T. M. Hudson and J. Munroe, was passed, by a vote of 67 to 24.

"Resolved, That in the judgment of this Conference, the charge contained in the fourth (now first,) specification, is sustained."

The next charge was taken up. This was admitted by the accused, who read the law of Virginia, of which an extract is here given :

"CHAPTER 66.—*An Act to suppress the circulation of incendiary publications, and for other purposes.* (Passed March 23, 1836.)

Whereas, attempts have been recently made by certain Abolitionists, or Anti-Slavery Societies, and evil disposed persons, being, and residing in some of the non-slaveholding States, to interfere with the relations existing between the master and slave in this State, and to excite in our colored population a spirit of insubordination, rebellion, and insurrection, by distributing among them, through the agency of the United States Mail, and other means, certain incendiary books, pamphlets, or other

writings of an inflammatory and mischievous character and tendency; for remedy whereof, and to provide against the dangers therein arising—

1. *Be it enacted by the General Assembly*—That any member of an Abolition or Anti-Slavery Society, or agent of an Abolition or Anti-Slavery Society, who shall come into this State, and shall here maintain, by speaking or writing, that the owners of slaves have no property in the same, or advocate or advise the abolition of slavery, shall be deemed guilty of a high misdemeanor, and, on conviction thereof, shall be fined in a sum of not less than fifty dollars, nor more than two hundred dollars, and suffer a term of imprisonment of not less than six months, nor more than three years, at the discretion of the jury.”

During his defense, Mr. S. said—

“Mr. Chairman, I will call the attention of the Conference to one or two particulars in this law. I am a member of an Anti-Slavery Society, and also an officer; to this, the Conference has offered no objections, now, or at any other time; consequently they do not think this wrong. Was I to go to Virginia, in what situation would I be placed? I would be subject to be sent to the Penitentiary for two years, should I advise a master to liberate his slave, or say the slave had a right to his freedom; for this would be saying the master had no right in the slave; for the master cannot have a right to the slave, and the slave a right to himself, at the same time. I might be sent to the penitentiary for five years, for taking a copy of ‘Zion’s Watchman’ out of the post-office. Now, sir, were I there, I would have to advise penitent masters to free their slaves, to let the oppressed go free. I would have to say, the servant was the Lord’s freeman. These things I said when I was there, before these laws were made, and as human laws cannot change moral principle, I would have to say them now, if I were there, or sin against God, and lose my soul. This is my full conviction of duty, on this point. Now, I put it to this Conference, ought I to permit you, sir, to send me to the penitentiary, because I would not violate my conscience, and sin against God. To allow you to send me to Virginia, in view of this law, would be to allow you to send me to the penitentiary, or to hell, and I hope you will not be offended with me, when I tell you, I am not willing that you should do either! This is a plain case; were I to go there and do my duty, I would be sent to the peni-

tentiary, and if I neglected my duty, and did not warn the people, I would lose the Divine favor, and perish. This is an awful subject; I hope the Conference will look at it. I am sure, sir, you will not ask this at my hand, nor do I think any of your colleagues would."

After an able plea, he added—

"I will now close. I have detained the Conference till some may be out of patience; but my ministerial all is at stake; this, I hope, will be sufficient apology. I submit the question, praying that the Conference may be enabled so to decide, that the interest of righteousness and truth may be subserved—and that their decision may be such an one as they can meet with joy in a coming day."

The Conference voted to sustain the charge contained in the specification, by a vote of 71 to 12.

"The Conference then came to their final action. Some one proposed or moved a vote of censure, and that his character pass, after receiving the censure or reproof which he proposed; but the Conference would not entertain it. Another took a resolution, of a similar import, to the Secretary's table, signed and seconded; but the Secretary threw it aside and would not read it, but read the resolution signed by J. Boyle and himself, as the only resolution proposed on the occasion."

The following preamble and resolution were read by the Secretary :

"Whereas it has appeared to this Conference, by his own confession, that the Rev. Edward Smith has declared to his Presiding Elder, that he would not take an appointment in Virginia, if the Bishop should appoint him there; and, whereas, it has been proved before this Conference, by the most clear, unimpeachable, and conclusive testimony, that he has also been guilty of making slanderous and false statements respecting the Church and his brethren. Therefore,

Resolved, That the Rev. E. Smith be, and hereby is, suspended from all official relation to the M. E. Church, until he shall give this Conference satisfactory evidence of repentance and reformation.

J. BOYLE.
C. COOKE."

"When this resolution was read by the Secretary, it was moved to have the resolution amended, by striking out the words 'and false.' The movers admitted the amendment, and the resolution, as amended, was adopted, by a vote of 62 to 17."

These extracts are from a published report certified to by members of the Conference and others, who witnessed the trial, in which Mr. Smith says:

"I informed the Conference of my intention to appeal to the General Conference, and asked for the privilege of taking a copy of the proceedings and testimony, which was granted. I then addressed a few words to the Conference, in which I informed them, that they might as well have cut me off at once, for I never expected to repent; that I believed in my heart that I had done no wrong, and that I expected to die in this belief; that I felt calm, confidently believing that God would overrule it for my good and his glory; that I felt deeply humbled under the honor they had conferred upon me; for I would be looked on, henceforth, as the first victim to anti-slavery principles in the M. E. Church; and that whatever might be my lot in future life, I hoped never to love Methodism less, or hate slavery less—and then left the Conference."

In conclusion, says Mr. Smith—

"I will invite the reader's attention to what the Conference found against me, and the punishment inflicted. There were seven charges preferred, and only two out of the seven sustained. These two require special attention. One of the charges, the sixth in the list of charges, was for saying I would not go to Virginia, should the Bishop send me there. I will state one case, which will show the true light in which the Conference viewed this charge when I was not interested. Bro. James H. White, at the previous Conference, in Clarkesburgh, told the Bishop, in the presence of the Conference, that he would not take an appointment in Virginia. This brother said publicly—on the floor of the Conference—in the face of the Bishop, what I said privately to my Presiding Elder. His offence, if an offence it be, was much more aggravated than mine. And what did the Conference do with him? They passed his character, and gave him an appointment, without censuring him in any way, or requiring him to take back one.

word of what he had said. And the Conference that suspended me passed his character again, and elected him to elder's orders; and he was ordained, and given an appointment, without having taken back one word of what he said at the Conference in Clarkesburgh; consequently, what I said could not have been esteemed by the Conference as a very serious matter. Bro. White was a young preacher, and had no claims to favor on account of former sacrifices and toils. I was an old preacher, and had some claims on these accounts. He did what he did publicly, in circumstances the most aggravating; I did the same thing privately, and in circumstances the least aggravating. He was approved, and advanced to the office of an Elder. It surely cannot be possible that I was censured and silenced on this account. This proves, if anything can be proven, that the Conference attached no criminality to this charge.

The other matter found against me, was for giving publicity to things slanderous of the church and of the preachers. The final resolution, offered by Bros. Boyle and Cooke, said I had made slanderous and false statements respecting the church and my brethren. The Conference was asked to say, by this resolution, that I had made slanderous and false statements, but refused to say the statements were false. The words 'and false' were stricken out, after the resolution became the property of the Conference, and consequently were stricken out by the Conference—by the consent of the Conference. And, the Conference refusing to say, when thus asked, that I had made false statements, was saying I had not made false statements. This is undeniable. Now what is my offence, according to this showing of the Conference? I made statements which were true; and in so doing, I slandered the church and my brethren—slandered them by telling the truth on them. This is just where the Conference placed the matter, by their own act. I have slandered the M. E. Church and her ministers, by telling the truth on them. Well, leave the matter where the Conference left it. To tell the truth cannot be an immorality under any circumstance: it can be but an imprudence, for which reprehension should have been given. This is all the discipline allows; but the Conference did much more with me. But I deny that it is an imprudence to tell the truth on the church and its ministers. The Prophets have shown the example, and the Lord himself commanded, 'Cry aloud, and spare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their trans-

gressions, and the house of Israel their sins.' It cannot be an imprudence; to follow the example of the Prophets, and to obey a plain command of the Most High. I contend that the Pittsburgh Conference has slandered the church and her ministers, an hundred fold more than I did; and if I should 'be avenged seven-fold,' the Conference should be 'seventy-seven-fold.' The Conference has said, by its solemn act in this case, that the M. E. Church and her ministers cannot bear to have the truth told on them—it is slandering them. This is the severest stab the Church ever got.

I now leave my readers to judge, in view of the circumstances of the case, what has been my offence, and whether I deserve the punishment inflicted on me; and if they think I do not, I hope they will extend to me, that Christian sympathy which my peculiarly trying situation calls for."

A distinguished member of the Conference said, a few months previous, in the *Watchman*:

"It is not my intention to pass any highly-wrought eulogy upon Bro. Smith, or any other good man, while he is yet living. But, as Dr. Bond has inflicted such a wound on his character, and through him, on many firm friends of the Church, I consider it due to Br. S., and the readers of the *Watchman*, to say, that he has sustained a fair reputation in this Conference, and filled the office of Presiding Elder with great fidelity, usefulness, and more than ordinary ability. And I may add, that he is generally acceptable as a preacher. It is true, a few individuals may be found, much opposed to him; but so far as I know, this should be set down to his advantage.

Bro. Smith is too close a preacher, and too good a disciplinarian, to rank with those preachers, concerning whom it is often said, 'They are universally beloved.' My prayer is, that neither Bro. S., nor any other preacher, may thus stand, unless the world and the Church greatly reform. In conclusion, I wish to say, that such is the standing of Bro. Smith in this circuit, where he labored three years in connection with a district, that any effort to prostrate him in the manner of the *Advocate*, will be seriously felt, and firmly resented, by the great body of the most pious, intelligent, and influential members in this charge.

ROBERT BOYD."

Washington, O., Jan. 18, 1841.

The Pennsylvania Freeman of Philadelphia, of the same period, says—

"A friend from Pittsburgh, informs us that this brother is sustained by the sympathy and approbation of almost the entire population of that city. On the Sunday following his suspension, three or four Churches of different denominations were thrown open to hear him lecture on the subject of Slavery. After one of his discourses, quite a crowd followed him out of the church to greet him, and express their good will. He lectured the next evening in Alleghany, and our informant says, that long before dark, the bridges over the river were crowded with persons going to hear him. It is considered that nothing, for years, has given such an impetus to the anti-slavery cause, in that region, as this prosecution."

The following testimony is from a gentleman in the West :

"I have known Bro. Smith for many years. I knew him when he was a member of the Baltimore Conference—knew him intimately. I have always regarded him as one of the most uncompromising friends of Methodism, and the souls of all men. He has been in the ministry twenty years; and, I think, I do not at all exaggerate, when I state, that he has been the means of converting as many souls as almost any other man now living. He has not only given his strength and his talents, to build up the Church, but likewise all his means. Never have I seen so much devotion to the Church in any one. He, for a long time, opposed the abolition cause; but becoming convinced of his error, was changed into a warm advocate of it. And although his devotion to the Church has continued, yet, because he hates slavery and expresses his abhorrence of it, he must be basely subjected to the ecclesiastical guillotine. The Lord bless his persecutors! pour out of His spirit upon them! give them hearty repentance for all their sins! and then life everlasting!"

R. McMURDY."

MERRITT BATES, a distinguished member of the Troy Conference, and, for some time, a Presiding Elder, gives the following narrative of his experience:

"In 1841, I was stationed at Keeseville, Essex county, N. Y.

In the commencement to the conclusion of the year, with but a short interval, during the progress of a powerful revival of religion—with which we were favored, against the most confident predictions of some of my opposers—I met with the most bitter and determined opposition from a few of the leading members, solely on the ground of my abolitionism. The agonies of mind I endured that year, are known only to God and myself. And yet I did but little on the subject of abolitionism. But I acknowledged myself an abolitionist, and would not pledge myself to refrain from the agitation of the question of Slavery. I delivered one lecture in the Baptist Church—being denied the use of my own pulpit for that purpose—plead the cause of the slave in private, prayed for the overthrow of slavery, and sometimes opened my mouth for the dumb in my public ministrations. This was the sum of my offence. One hundred and thirty were added to the Church; and more than \$1,000 obtained, by my personal efforts, for the enlargement of the meeting-house, for the existence of which, ten years before, the Methodists were more indebted to my earnest and persevering efforts, than to those of any other man living. And yet, against the ardent wishes of the great mass of the Church, I was removed at the end of one year.

In 1842, I was stationed at North Second-street, Troy. Though I preached but one abolition sermon, in the fullest sense of the term, and that one the last that I ever preached in that church; yet almost from the commencement of my labors, the opposition of certain prominent official members was determined, systematical and bitter. As early as September, if the statement of my Presiding Elder, made before the last Conference, be correct, two or three applications had been made to him for my removal, solely on the ground of my abolitionism; though it was admitted that I had, as yet, said but little on the subject. It was, however, greatly feared that I would, as a pledge to the contrary, could not be obtained from me—and, then, merely for the purpose of illustration, one of the Stewards left the house, and very soon after, called on me for a certificate of membership. In October, Bishop Hedding called on me, and requested me to meet him, the Rev. T. Spicer, Rev. N. Levings, and such of my opposers as might be invited to attend, with a view of adjusting existing difficulties. He told me that unless there was an adjustment, there would, probably, be a formal request for my removal; thus, as I conceived, holding a rod of

terror over my head. I objected to such a meeting, but was willing to meet the whole Church or the official board. He said he had proposed a meeting of the whole board, but as it might lead to an abolition discussion, the brethren, whom he had consulted, objected to it. He had, therefore, requested two or three brethren to invite such as they might select—not, however, extending the request to a large number, and including such only as were dissatisfied with my course. I asked the privilege of having, at least, one friend present, but that was denied me by the Bishop, unless there should be some important discrepancy between my statements, as to facts, and those of my opposers; in which event I might call in one or two friends to corroborate my statements. I solemnly remonstrated against such a meeting, as partial and arbitrary; though at length I consented to attend, on condition that, if application was made for my removal, no action of the Bishop should be taken upon it, without calling together the whole official board.

I will not attempt to give the proceedings of that meeting in detail. They were such as might be expected from its nature—quisitorial in a high degree. It consisted of the Bishop, the Rev. T. Spicer, who was my Presiding Elder, the Rev. N. Levings, and eight members of the North Second-street M. E. Church; and continued from 9, A. M., till 5, P. M., with a short interval for dinner. The meeting was opened in a solemn manner, the Bishop leading in prayer. Each one was then requested to state his grievances. The great burden of complaint was, that I was an abolitionist, and would not promise to refrain from the agitation of the subject in the Church. Great exceptions were taken to certain expressions which I had used in the pulpit, in reference to this effort to remove me, on the preceding Sabbath. After they had all spoken, the Bishop told them that it did not appear from their statements that I had preached distinctive abolitionism since I had been with them; yet he was careful, at the same time, to say, that no Methodist preacher had a right to do it in any Methodist pulpit. By distinctive abolitionism he meant, the doctrine that slaveholding is sinful under all circumstances. As I was not prepared to give any pledge that I would refrain from the agitation of slavery, and my opposers did not see fit, at that time, to request my removal, though a motion was made to that effect by one of them, the meeting broke up in an informal manner, without coming to any definite point. After its close, I told Bishop Heddle, that

though I was a friend to the M. E. Church, and had expected to live and die in it, yet if the doctrine he had that day advanced—that no Methodist preacher had a right to preach distinctive abolitionism in any Methodist pulpit—were maintained, I should be compelled to leave it; as that was a doctrine to which I could never submit. I owe it to the Bishop to say, that subsequently he called on me, and requested an unrestrained and affectionate interview. He treated me in the kindest manner, expressed ardent desire for my welfare, and hoped that I would not leave the Church. Yet the only ground on which he could advise or wish me to remain, as I understood him, was, the hope that there would be some change in my views and course on the subject of Slavery. In a subsequent conversation, he said, that my views, on that subject, were contrary to the Methodist discipline; that they would not, as a general thing, be endured by the Methodists; and that I was liable to be arrested, censured, located or expelled, for no other crime than preaching that slaveholding is sinful under all circumstances. This latter statement was in answer to my inquiries.

I mention the name of Bishop Hedding, and give publicity to some of his statements, not with a view of injuring his feelings or reputation; for I entertain for him personal sentiments of kindness and respect: but I could not, in justice to myself, omit all allusion to these facts, with which his name is inseparably connected.

The opposition in North Second-street continued during the year; the details of which would fill a volume. It was such a year of trial as I never before experienced. Yet I am bold to say, that amidst all these conflicts, the work of vital religion was reviving in the hearts of many members of the Church, and the foundation was laid for the great accession of numbers which ensued. Though in consequence of severe sickness I was not permitted to participate much in the protracted meeting, until near its close, yet I allow myself to believe, that the 230 added to the Church in the course of a few weeks, were in some measure the fruits of that seed which God had enabled me to sow amidst afflictions and tears.

At the Conference of 1843, held in the Church of which I was pastor, a powerful effort was made to crush me at a blow. Sometime after the Conference had convened, my Presiding Elder, the Rev. T. Spicer, informed me, that he should feel it his duty when my name was called, to say something like this;

that there had been some dissatisfaction with my course during the year, and it might be well to appoint a Committee of investigation in my case. He also told me, that unless there should be some change in my views and course, he should not feel at liberty to recommend me to any charge the ensuing year. He, however, presented nothing in writing, nor did he bring a formal charge. When my name was called, I think the next day after this interview, instead of doing as he had suggested, he arose and read a communication covering five pages of letter paper, purporting to give a historical sketch of my proceedings during the year, and presenting my character and conduct in a very objectionable light. When I asked for a copy of that paper, that I might prepare for my defense, he refused to give it; and when I threw myself upon the Conference for protection, he was directed to give me, not a copy in full, but such an abstract as he might think proper. He accordingly handed me a paper of which the following is an exact copy. It read, without preamble or superscription, thus :

1. Too impatient of contradiction.
2. An unkind spirit.
3. Harsh, censorious and severe in his manner, both in public and in private ; unbecoming a christian or Methodist preacher.
4. Alluding to his removal, he said in the pulpit, 'Take care, take care, Woe, woe to the men who remove me,' or words to this effect.
5. Publishing and recommending the lectures of a certain gentleman from Albany, on the second advent.
6. Neglecting his proper work to attend these lectures.
7. Disaffection to the economy and discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church.'

It is not a little remarkable that the subject of slavery or abolition, was not so much as alluded to, in the long string of objections read before the Conference, or in the meagre abstract of it above quoted, with which my Presiding Elder condescended to favor me. As he well knew that abolitionism was the ground of all the difficulties, why did he manage so adroitly to keep it out of sight in his bill of exceptions to me? Was he afraid of an abolition discussion in the Conference? I offered to be at the trouble of copying his long article, if he would give me a copy ; but he would not allow me that privilege. He did, however, permit me to look it over in his presence in the Conference room ; but when I made my defense before the Conference, he refused me the use of it for purposes of reference ; and I was obliged to reply to its numerous statements, as well as to

could, from memory. I regard this as about the climax of ecclesiastical tyranny.

A Committee of seven was appointed to examine my case, four of whom were not abolitionists; and after a patient investigation, they reported strongly in my favor; and the report was adopted by the Conference by a very large majority.

One evening, during the progress of my trial, before the Committee reported to the Conference, my mind was greatly depressed with an apprehension that I should be crushed by the combined power arrayed against me; and as I took up the Bible, at the hour of family devotion, I earnestly desired that I might open to some portion that would afford me encouragement and comfort. I opened upon Isa. xli. 10, and that part of the chapter which particularly impressed me, was from the 10th to the 16th verse, to which I earnestly request the reader to refer. Those who witnessed the result of the trial, cannot doubt that these precious promises were fulfilled.

As my Presiding Elder had represented, that a great part of the Church in North Second-street disapproved of my course, some of my friends thought I ought to be able to present a counter statement to the Conference. They accordingly drew up a paper, expressive of their decided approval of my character and course, and of their earnest desire that I might be continued their pastor another year. Though they did not go out with it till 4 o'clock, P. M., yet that afternoon and evening, they obtained the names of 223 members and probationers of the Church. One of the stewards subsequently called on the Bishop, and told him that he could, in twenty-four hours, obtain four hundred names, members and friends of the Church, who desired my re-appointment. But the Bishop told him it would be of no use. I was accordingly removed from the city—though it was known that my wife was confined to her room—and appointed to Rensselaerville, one of the most secluded places in the Troy Conference; yet, in itself, a good station; to which I should cheerfully have gone, under ordinary circumstances.

Why was I removed from Troy? Was it because my qualifications, as a preacher, were inadequate to the station? The Bishop who appointed me there, had, himself, sat under my ministry, and ought to have known whether I was competent. My opposers, I believe, did not assign this as their reason for desiring a change. Was it because I had not been faithful in the

discharge of my pastoral duties? The Committee who sat in judgment on my case, say, in their report, which was adopted by the Conference, ‘That Bro. Bates has faithfully performed the work of a Methodist minister during the past year, according to his health and strength.’ Why, then, was I removed? Manifestly on the ground of my abolitionism. I have been given most distinctly to understand, from high authority, that if I would pursue a different course on that subject, I could have any appointment I might desire within the bounds of the Conference. I ought, perhaps, to say, that Bishop Hedding kindly offered to transfer me to any Conference in New-England, without any change in my views of slavery, if I thought I could enjoy myself any better there, on account of the more extensive prevalence of abolition principles. This offer, however, afforded no relief to my feelings. If it is contrary to Methodism to preach abolitionism in New-York, it cannot be in accordance with it to do it in New-England; for Methodism, in New-York and New-England, is the same: and I could not ask or consent to be expatriated, for the privilege of contravening the provisions of the Methodist discipline, with some degree of impunity, in a land of strangers.

In Rensselaerville, I met with the same adverse influences, on the subject of abolitionism, that I encountered in Keeseville and Troy; though not developed in exactly the same form, nor to the same extent. During my stay there, I had opportunity not only to survey the whole ground, and mark the tone of the official journals of the M. E. Church, but also to consult some of the ablest and most influential ministers in the connection. The result was, the full conviction that my views of truth and duty, on the subject of Slavery, were adverse to the settled policy of the M. E. Church; and that it would be impossible for me to live in peace, and enjoy the confidence of my brethren, without such a compromise of principle as I could not, in conscience, make. A long conversation with a distinguished and esteemed member of the Troy Conference, on the 17th of January last, fully confirmed me in this view. Accordingly, I wrote to my Presiding Elder the next day, informing him that I had dissolved my connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church.

For the information and satisfaction of my friends, and to prevent evil speaking and evil surmising, I insert the following testimonial received from my Presiding Elder, after I had

withdrawn: "To all whom it may concern: This certifies that Rev. M. Bates was, at the time he dissolved his relation to the Methodist Episcopal Church, in good and regular standing, and acceptable among the people of his charge as a minister; and, so far as I know, the circumstances of his withdrawal from us, were honorable and satisfactory.

EPHRAIM GOSS, P. E."

Rensselaerville, Jan. 29, 1844.

DENNIS HARRIS.—The New-York Memorial and the Protest involved this brother in the charge of falsehood. The facts are these:—J. O. Dorr, Class Leader, had become disconnected with the Methodist Church, and then again re-united with it. Being engaged in getting signers to the famous memorial, he was declared, by C. A. Davis, the pastor of his Church, "not a member."

But, to prove that he had been a member, Mr. Harris gave his certificate, published in the Watchman of June 27th, not knowing that Mr. Davis had said that Dorr was not a member. And then, presto! Mr. Davis clapt upon Mr. Harris the charge of falsehood, (wilful falsehood,) and on this charge Mr. Harris was tried.

The trial, instead of being in the church vestry, or some adjoining room, as usual in such cases, was in Mr. Davis' own dwelling-house. Mr. Harris having never been subjected to a trial before, had requested Dr. Barrett to assist him in his trial. The following letter, written on the evening of the trial, gives a faint idea of the treatment he received:

"DEAR BROTHER,—This evening I accompanied Bro. Harris to the house of the Rev. C. A. Davis, pastor of the Methodist E. Church in Vestry-street, where he was 'summoned to appear and answer to a charge of ' falsehood, presented, I understand, by the Rev. C. A. Davis himself.' I attended, at the earnest request of the accused, to assist him in the management of his trial. On arriving at the house of the Rev. C. A. Davis, we were received with every mark of urbanity and kindness—

he shook hands—invited us to seats—ordered us cool water, &c. Believing that the charges against Bro. Harris, had originated in the diversity of views which the accuser and accused had entertained, as to the membership of Bro. Dorr, I felt anxious to effect a reconciliation, if possible, without the matter coming to a trial. I, therefore, invited the Rev. C. A. Davis to the back door—stated to him my views of the case—and asked whether the matter could not be settled on the ground, that it was a mere diversity of opinion. But I found, at once, that it was useless to urge the thing. He declared that he could prove the charge and specifications. So I gave up this effort; and took my seat in the house, to await the trial and assist the accused.

Soon after the time arrived, the Rev. C. A. Davis prayed. Having waited some half hour, for the arrival of a member of the Committee—the names, Kirby, Howe and Standish, were called, and they were requested to take seats around the table.

It was now, that the Rev. C. A. Davis arose, and stated, ‘that every person present, who was not called as a witness, must leave the house.’ He added, ‘I have my reasons for taking this course.’ He did not give his reasons! On hearing the decision, some few persons took their hats and left the house. I felt that this order was not exactly in accordance with former usage in Methodist trials; and standing near the Rev. C. A. Davis, I attempted to state to him that I had been requested, by Bro. Harris, to assist him in the management of his case. But he would not hear my statement; nor suffer others to hear it. He threw himself into the attitude of the orator—and, with a stentorian voice, forbade me the liberty of a word. He reiterated his order, that all, not interested as witnesses, must at once depart. On making another effort to get a hearing from him, he spoke in a still higher tone, and with increased energy of action—he faced me, and said, ‘Dr. Barrett must leave the house! Dr. Barrett must leave the house!! You must go now, Doctor!!’

Finding it useless to attempt to speak—my voice not being so strong as his—and besides, the Rev. C. A. Davis, having declared that he ‘would not argue the point with any man,’ I concluded to go. Just as I had come to this conclusion, he looked with terror at me, and said, ‘you must go!’

Feeling apprehensive that he might feel tempted to ‘Prove his doctrine orthodox, by Apostolic blows and knocks’—as soon

as I could, I delivered my notes, for conducting the trial, to the accused; and having commended him to the protection of Him, whose judgment is according to truth, I made my exit, declaring the course to be arbitrary.

Now, brother, if I have been faulty in the part which I have acted in the drama, I take this occasion to crave pardon of my God, and of the offended.

Years in the cause of the oppressed,

T. S. BARRETT."

New-York, June 29, 1840.

Those who were present, were utterly amazed at this proceeding, and Bro. Harris was thunderstruck. He expected some show of fairness, and was utterly unprepared to see his prosecutor and judge play the inquisitor without disguise. Having deprived the accused of his council, he drove off the reporter, lest he should give the world an impartial statement of facts. Having played the tragedy thus far, he next performed the farce of calling on the accused to bring forward his witnesses!!! Bro. Harris' friends advised him to protest against these proceedings. He attempted to do so, but seemed completely unmanned by Mr. Davis' violence, and at length quietly permitted his own witnesses to be examined first. Let the reader look at the circumstances under which their testimony must be given. The president of the court had a packed jury of three, selected by himself, and convened in his own house. In the exercise of his unlimited power, he first deprived his intended victim of all benefit of council, assistance or advice, a privilege which civil courts secure to the vilest criminals. He then directed one of the committee [Dr. Kirby,] to act as clerk. In the course of the proceedings he would tell the clerk to "mark that," when anything seemed especially favorable to himself,—but when facts of an opposite character were developed, he would say, "Never mind about that."

The public proceedings closed between one and two o'clock in the night. The next day, Bro. Harris received the following note :

"New-York, June 30, 1840.

"MR. DENNIS HARRIS—Dear Sir,—The Committee having found you guilty of the charge and specifications, on which you have been examined, you are, therefore, suspended from all official services in the Methodist Episcopal Church, until the next Quarterly Conference of the Vestry-street station, before which, 'exact minutes of the charges, testimony and examination, together with the decision of the Committee,' will be laid; and where it will be your duty to appear. Notice of the time of said Conference will be furnished you.

Respectfully, C. A. DAVIS."

The charge in this case, as in others, was not "abolitionism." But its connection therewith, is too obvious, to need special explanations. Yet it may be well to insert the following facts, related to the author, by Mr. Harris:

At a prayer-meeting held some months previous, as the preacher was not in, at the time, to open the service, Bro. Harris was requested to begin. He did. Before prayer, Mr. Davis entered, and Bro. H. tendered to him the book, but he declined, and wished Bro. H. to proceed. In prayer he remembered the slave. Immediately after, Mr. D. rose, and in some unkind remarks, denounced and condemned this bringing abolition into the Church, and peremptorily insisted, that it should not be done. By consent of Mr. D., Bro. H. responded before the meeting closed. This altercation led Davis to demand his class paper privately, which he offered at the next Leaders' meeting. But the brethren prevailed with him to retain it. This incident was before, and, doubtless, led to the outrage narrated above.

Happily for Davis himself, the proceedings were quashed before the Quarterly Conference came on. Soon after, Br. Harris asked for, and obtained, his certificate from Mr. Davis, of good standing, as a local preacher, in the Church, and retired. Since then, from the earliest organization of the Wesleyan Churches, he has been known as an active and efficient minister, and liberal supporter of the connection in New-York city.

PORTER R. SAWTER, resided at Pittsburgh, Pa. He was recommended to the Quarterly-Meeting Conference in 1839, for license to preach, but it was refused, on the sole ground of abolitionism. Earnestly desiring to be useful and engage in the ministry, he relinquished a good business, and removed with his wife and child to New-England, to find a home among strangers.

He gives the following narrative of his case, in a letter to Rev. O. Scott, July 2, 1839 :

"On Monday, the 17th of June, 1839, I saw Dr. Sellers, (brother-in-law of Bishop Emory, deceased,) a man of considerable influence in the Liberty-street station, Pittsburgh, (where I hold my membership,) who told me that he wished I would call at his office the day following, (18th,) ten or fifteen minutes before the Q. M. Conference commenced. I called to see him as requested; and after the customary preliminaries to an interview had passed, he informed me that he should oppose my getting a license to preach; said he, you are a member of an A. S. Society, and your affiliation in it would necessarily lead you to engage in the excitement that had disturbed the peace of the Church; that the Church was opposed to such things; and in his opinion, she was taking the wisest course in reference thereto; and, therefore, he should, conscientiously, oppose me. I replied, that I was a member of an A. S. S., and briefly stated the way in which I became such—that it was with my eyes open, in a cool, deliberate manner; that my mind was fixed, and his decision would not alter it; that I should not be offended at him, or any other brother, for voting against, if he could not vote for, me conscientiously. Some other things were said by both of us, which I do not now recollect. I went from this scene to the Q. M. Conference. In the progress of the business, my case, as an exhorter, was called up; and the question being asked by the Presiding Elder, (C. Cooke,) Is there anything against Bro. Sawyer? Rev. W. Browning (preacher in charge,) answered that there was nothing against me. Whereupon, I retired from the Conference, to give them an opportunity of examining my character. In a few minutes I was called in; it was then made known to the Conference, that I was an applicant for preacher's license. The Presiding Elder then examined me, by asking sundry questions. After I had answered the questions the

Presiding Elder mentioned to the Q. M. Conference that, if any of the brethren had any other questions to ask me, they were at liberty to do so. Accordingly, Dr. Sellers rose and stated to the meeting, the interview he had had with me, repeating a few things that passed at the time; he said, that, as a private citizen or a private member in the Church, he had no objection to me, nay, farther, that Bro. Sawyer might continue to be the Secretary of their Leaders' Meeting, as long as he wished, and it would never interfere with him in the least; but that he was now applying to sustain a different relation to the Church, &c., &c.; he then asked me the following questions: how far do you feel yourself bound to obey the authorities of the Church? And how far do you feel at liberty in any contingency, or circumstance, to attend to these things, (meaning anti-slavery things.) This is the substance; the exact form of the questions, I do not now recollect; but think that it differs very little from what I have stated. I replied that, if the General Conference should pass a law that the brethren should not preach against sundry crimes, (mentioning some,) I should not feel bound to obey them. I said that I should not feel at liberty to neglect my regular duties to attend to these things."

SOME CASES OF PROSCRIPTION AMONG LAYMEN.

RICHARD M. SMITH AND ROBERT M. HAGEMAN.—The following letter from the Watchman, presents their cases:

"Bustleton, Pa., March 22, 1838.

"MESSRS. EDITORS,—It affords me no pleasure to present to the world the faults of others. But when I see a determination, right or wrong, to put down those among us called abolitionists, I feel that the cause of truth and the oppressed, bid me speak thus publicly. To portray to you the threats and persecutions towards those who have come out decided friends of the slave, would be to repeat numerous instances of a similar nature. I shall, therefore, confine myself to some of the proceedings of the Quarterly Conference, of the Methodist E. Church, held in this place on the 17th ult.

There were but three members of the Conference abolitionists; a local preacher, exhorter, and steward. A few weeks

since, the Board of Trustees consisted of both parties, but at their last meeting, the Abolitionists were deposed and others put in their places. This gave them great cause for triumph. And they declared it their determination to put down the fanatics. Accordingly they came prepared. The Presiding Elder, Rev. J. Smith, and the preacher in charge, Rev. L. Prettyman, are both avowed enemies to abolitionism. The local preacher named above, is a young man recently from Maine, Richard M. Smith. His case was called up, and the following charges were preferred against him:—1. Of being an Abolitionist. 2. Scattering incendiary pamphlets.

He confessed he was an Abolitionist, and had distributed a few ‘incendiary pamphlets,’ viz: ‘Wesley’s thoughts on Slavery.’ The Presiding Elder then asked this question, ‘What course shall you pursue in future?’ To which Bro. Smith answered, the same as he had done. Upon these charges his license was withhold, and his case referred to the next Conference for trial.

But we have another case which will exhibit, in brighter colors, the spirit of our opposers. Bro. Robert M. Hagerman, an exhorter, (agent of Zion’s Watchman in this place,) long known as a pious, devoted Christian, was called upon to give up his principles and cease to open his mouth for the dumb. His case was called up, and the following motion made, by a local preacher, named Boreing:

‘That we renew the license of Bro. Hagerman, provided, he give up the agency of that incendiary publication, Zion’s Watchman, and keep his abolitionism out of the Church.’

Before putting this motion, the Presiding Elder rose and addressed the Conference some ten or fifteen minutes, descanting, in unmeasured terms, upon the character of the ‘Radicals,’ as he was pleased to call them. He then concluded his remarks, by calling the attention of the Conference to the effects of abolitionism. ‘Look around you,’ said he, ‘see its withering influence. Dr. Fisk told me, a few weeks since, that in N. England it was a complete moral desolation, and thus are its effects everywhere, where it exists. But they have got about to the end of the chapter, they must be put down, and the course we shall pursue is not to renew Abolitionists’ license, or license any that are such, this is the course we have taken in Philadelphia.’

The motion above referred to, was then put and carried. Thus has a brother been deposed from his standing in the

Church, merely for acting as every consistent, conscientious man would, in the performance of his duty.

Yours respectfully, JOHN G. CHASE."

E. W. GOODWIN, thus states his loss of official character in the Church :

" On the evening of Sunday, Nov. 25, I requested the privilege of our preacher in charge, Rev. H. F. Row, to offer a few remarks, before the benediction was to be pronounced. Accordingly, when that time arrived, the minister informed the congregation that Bro. Goodwin had something to communicate, or words to that effect. I then rose, read a notice for the monthly concert of prayer for the slaves, to be held in the lecture-room we were then in, and added some remarks.

The next morning I was waited on at an early hour by the preacher, who informed me, if I intended to persist in my course, (by which I understood my being an Abolitionist,) he should deprive me of my official standing as a leader in the Church. On my reply, that I thought I had done nothing wrong, nor anything more than conscience and duty dictated, and that I must, therefore, continue my abolition course, he then required my official paper ! I asked if I might know the particular reason of my removal. He answered, ' It is on account of your abolitionism, and your course last night ! ' * * *

Yours with and for the oppressed,
Auburn, N. Y., Dec. 29, 1838. E. W. GOODWIN."

J. O. DORR, thus states the case of his removal from office in the Church :

" During the sitting of the N. Y. A. Conference last May, the Rev. J. Z. Nichols, pastor of the Duane-st. Church, stated to me that he felt it his duty to demand my class-book, as I had agitated my class with the subject of abolition, and had likewise attended abolition lectures during the protracted meeting in Duane-st. While I denied, in express terms, my ever having agitated my class, I admitted that I had attended two lectures given by the Rev. Luther Lee.

Three or four months after this, I was shown a paper, by our present pastor, (Rev. M. Richardson,) purporting to be a pledge given by me to the Rev. C. W. Carpenter, and Rev. J. Z.

Nichols—not to agitate the Church with the subject of abolition, and wholly to refrain from all abolition movements! I protested against such a movement as this, and denied ever having given any such pledge. I requested a copy of this paper, but could not obtain it! Being a delegate from the Methodist A. S. Society, of Duane-st., to the Convention now in session in this city, I reported our society, as having been formed soon after the rising of the N. Y. A. Conference—that we commenced with 20 members—now numbered about 60, and hoped, that in another year, we should have half the Church. Bro. Richardson said I had disturbed the peace of the Church, and had broken my pledge, and he must therefore demand my book. It was given up.

New-York, Feb. 16, 1839.

J. O. DORR."

PERSECUTION IN PENNSYLVANIA.—The following is from a letter from an esteemed brother in North East, Pa., Feb. 1840: "Our preacher in charge, has spent much of his time in efforts to stop the circulation of the Watchman, and none dare take it but such as would sooner sacrifice their connection with the M. E. Church, than abandon the cause of the poor slave.

The preacher has expelled four brethren, and to do so, he acted as prosecutor and judge. He denied them the privilege of defense before a mock committee.

These startling facts could be multiplied. The subject would receive no additional light, however, as the same features would only be reproduced. The incidents narrated, are a sufficient basis for a correct judgment on the issue. The result of this extensive series of proscriptions, was soon felt and manifested. It generated a loss of confidence in the integrity of the prime ministers, who, in many cases, were the prime movers of these measures. This was associated with a decrease of attachment to the Church itself. While many desired to give a powerful testimony against Slavery that should be felt throughout the land. These things combined, prepared the way for withdrawal from the Methodist Episcopal Church, on the alleged ground, that it was hopelessly wedded to slavery, and could only be waked up to see its true position, by such decided action.

SECOND PART.

THE

HISTORY

OF THE

WESLEYAN METHODIST CONNECTION

OF AMERICA.

WITH AN APPENDIX,

SHOWING THE RESULTS SUBSEQUENT TO SECESSION IN THE
M. E. CHURCH.

BY LUCIUS C. MATLACK.

NEW-YORK.

1849.

INTRODUCTION.

The incidents which distinguished the last chapter of the first part of this volume, were productive of results, perhaps, not anticipated by the principal actors.

One of these results was, the withdrawal of many useful ministers, with thousands of worthy members, who united together in a new ecclesiastical organization, distinguished from the M. E. Church, by parity in its ministry—the association of laymen and clergymen in Yearly and General Conferences—the actual control of each Church over its own affairs—and the adoption of total abstinence from all intoxicating drinks, and non-fellowship with slaveholding, as tests of membership.

The character of the men who were prominent in this movement, their long standing, deserved influence, and the plausible grounds alleged for their conduct, led the authorities of the M. E. Church, to fear the effect of their example, and endeavor to prevent it, as far as possible. This was attempted in various ways. The official papers were employed by editors and correspondents, in impugning their personal character—ridiculing the number, character, and condition of their adherents—misrepresenting the reasons for their withdrawal—affirming that their sentiments and conduct were anti-Wesleyan and unscriptural—and that the organization they had framed, was fatally defective, and unworthy the support or confidence of intelligent Christians. All this was reiterated by tens of thousands, much to the injury of those assailed, but more to the reproach of the assailants.

In view of the above facts, there is presented in this work, an account of the anti-slavery secession—the prominent individuals engaged therein—accurate statistics of the denomination—the grounds alleged for their organization, with a statement and defence of the economy which they have adopted. This will constitute it in fact, the first volume of the "History of the Wesleyan Methodist Connection in the United States."

The character and design of this volume, is now fully before the reader. The field of observation therein presented, abounds with objects of interest. That attention has been directed to them in the best manner, is not presumed. But without further remark, the volume is submitted to the public, as the merit to be attached to the performance, will not be increased or lessened by the explanation of

CHAPTER I.

EXCESSIONS IN CLEVELAND, MUNROE AND WILLIAMSFIELD, OHIO
UTICA, NEW-YORK; AND MICHIGAN—WITHDRAWAL OF HORTON,
SCOTT AND SUNDERLAND.

The strongest earthly ties are those by which men are attached to the religious organization, through whose instrumentality they have been called from sin unto holiness. But the most ardent affection may be destroyed, by accumulating evidence of the unworthiness of its object. And ardently as many Abolitionists loved the Methodist Episcopal Church, the action of her authorities, on the subject of Slavery and in relation to those who espoused the slave's cause, changed that affectionate regard to mere endurance which soon gave place to serious disaffection, and was followed by ultimate withdrawal.

This result was not simultaneous, as if preconcerted, but it occurred at distant points, and long intervals. Without further preliminary, I introduce to notice, such facts, respecting these developments, as I have been able to procure from various sources, in the order of time in which they occurred. A fuller account, embracing all the facts, will be given by the pen of a future historian.

CLEVELAND, OHIO.—A letter from this place to the author, written by R. H. Blackmer, and dated March 26, 1845, says:

"The exercise of the despotic power, vested in the clergy of the M. E. Church previous to the year 1839, had given much dissatisfaction in Cleveland, and led many members to dislike the government of said Church: but the developments of Episcopal power in 1838-9, brought affairs to a crisis. We had witnessed the suspension and expulsion of ministers and members, on account of anti-slavery efforts; the management of the bishops in annual conferences—putting to vote pro-slavery resolutions, and refusing to allow actions on anti-slavery ones; the presid-

ing elders, exercising the same powers in quarterly conferences, and lastly, the 'gag resolutions' of the Erie Annual Conference. These last, led us to action. We introduced resolutions at our Quarterly Conference, declaring it to be the duty of ministers of the gospel, to preach against all sin, and especially 'the sum of all villanies'—disapproving of said 'gag resolutions,' and petitioning the Conference to recind them. The Presiding Elder refused to put the resolutions to vote, saying they were not Conference business. This decision was appealed from, but the Presiding Elder refused to allow the appeal—claiming the absolute power to decide what the Conference might do, and what it might not. After much altercation, we adjourned the Conference to the next day, when, the Presiding Elder not being present, we passed the resolutions. This was in July, 1839, and the Annual Conference, which met the following month, annexed Cleveland station to a circuit—evidently for the purpose of dissolving the Quarterly Conference, because the majority were anti-slavery or anti-Episcopacy, and both must be put down. This last act led to the secession."

MUNROE, OHIO.—A letter in Zion's Watchman, from Ensign B. Hill, dated June, 1840, says :

"It is nearly one year since, about thirty persons, who seceded from the M. E. Church on account of their objections to the recent administration of discipline within said Church, were formed into a large Congregational Church, which has been much blessed of the Lord. Their numbers have about doubled, and I trust their graces have increased. They have established an interesting Sabbath-school and Bible class. We have not been exempted from our share of persecution. But it has not injured us. The Lord be praised for his goodness to the feeble and oppressed."

WILLIAMSFIELD, OHIO.—About the same period, a secession occurred in this place. David Pechin, speaking of them in a communication to the True Wesleyan of April 25, 1846, says :

"Six years ago, there was a secession here, from the Methodist E. Church, on account of Slavery and Church government. They organized a Congregational Church. They anticipated a secession of the main body of the Abolitionists, and whenever that event should take place, it was their intention to become united therewith."

UTICA, NEW-YORK.—During the same year, a large number of members withdrew from the M. E. Church in Utica. The reasons assigned were: the efforts of the authorities to suppress the anti-slavery discussion in the Church; its pro-slavery character; the action of the Oneida Conference, in restoring an expelled member, and the government of the Church.

They organized under the title, "The Wesleyan Methodist Church of Utica." The ensuing year, a meeting was called at Utica, to take measures for holding a General Convention of seceding Methodists, and form a common organization. Persons attended this preliminary meeting, from the Protestant and the Reformed Methodists, the seceders in Cleveland, and a few individuals from Michigan. No important result followed.

MICHIGAN.—For the full and interesting detail given below, I am indebted to Wm. M. Sullivan, who kindly prepared it at my request. He says:

"In the year 1839, secession commenced in this State, in consequence of the proscriptive measures of many ministers in the M. E. Church, and the arbitrary character of her government. Secessions, however, this year, related only to individuals. They had grown weary of the proscriptions which they were compelled to bear from the domination of many of the Episcopal Methodist ministers, over their consciences on the subject of Slavery, and here and there, in different parts, had forsaken the Church, determined to plead, untrammelled, the cause of their oppressed countrymen. Some resorted to other Churches, while others stood alone for many months, without the aids in the maintainance of their Christian character, which they formerly derived from the Church they once loved. Among the seceders this year, was the Rev. W. W. Crane, of Eaton county—a man, acknowledged as a Christian, and talented as a preacher. For some time before his emigration to this State, he was a member of the Genesee Annual Conference of the State of New-York.

The first organized secession in this State, took place about the first of February, 1841. There were five classes in the western part of Wayne county, drew off at the same time, numbering near eighty members. A delegated Convention

from these several classes, with some others, which were soon after added to their number, was called, to adopt measures for their organization as a Church. This Convention met, at Thayer's Corners, town of Plymouth, Wayne Co., May 13, 1841. They denominated themselves, 'Wesleyan Methodists,' without any regard to locality, as will be seen by referring to the title-page of their discipline.

The same year, a class of twenty-five members withdrew from the M. E. Church, in the town of Manchester, Washtenaw Co., and a class of sixteen at Wolf Creek, Lenawee Co., both of which have been instrumental in the introduction of Wesleyan Methodism in those two counties, to the satisfaction of hundreds. The year succeeding, about fifty seceded in the county of Hillsdale, out of which three classes were formed—two in Adams, and one in the town of Wheatland.

Several small classes were formed about the same time, mostly made up of seceders in Jackson county—two in Ingham county, one at Leslie, and another in the town of Onondaga, one at Batavia, Branch county, and one among the new settlers in the Grand River Valley, far away in the north-west part of the State.

The cause of secession, in this State, was this: Two local preachers of the M. E. Church were recommended to the Annual Conference, for ordination as elders, according to the disciplinary provisions of said Church. Both of these preachers were men universally loved where they were known. One of them, Marcus Swift, was, for some time, a member on probation, in the Annual Conference. And the other, Samuel Bebbens, had traveled under the direction of Presiding Elders, in the State of New-York. These brethren were regularly recommended for ordination, and were entitled to it, by the discipline and usages of said Church. But they were Abolitionists—they had fearlessly identified themselves with the friends of the enslaved,—they were in the habit of bringing the claims of the oppressed before their brethren in the ministry and laity, wherever they had opportunity. Their character, in this respect, was brought as an offence by these ministers, who were entrusted with their recommendation. The highest representations of their moral and ministerial character was admitted; but they were Abolitionists. They would swallow no gags, and the Conference, consequently, refused them the office of elders in the Church of God.

These two rejected brethren, after ascertaining, to their satisfaction, that no redress could be expected from the Annual Conference of the M. E. Church, withdrew, with most of the members of their respective Quarterly Conferences, and a number of members of both sexes, amounting, in all, to about eighty.

The first Annual Conference, of these brethren, was held in Plymouth, in the school-house at Thayer's Corners, the same place where the discipline was adopted about eleven months before. The opening of this Conference, as appears on their journals, is dated Feb. 28, 1842.

The second Conference was held at Lapham's Corners, in the town of Salem, Washtenaw county, Oct. 20, 1842.

During this Conference year, the Convention was called at Utica, N. Y., for the purpose of uniting the several branches of seceders, in the Northern States. A call was soon after issued, in this State, and a Mass Convention was held, of ministers and laymen, who responded to said call, by the appointment of four delegates, to represent them at the Utica Convention.

Ministerial—Marcus Swift, W. M. Sullivan. *Laymen*—Geo. J. Barker, Valorus Meeker.

The ministerial delegation only, were able to attend. Such was the confidence of the Wesleyans, in this State, in those who had issued the call in the east, to frame a discipline to meet the wants of seceders in every part of the country, that they laid upon them no restrictions, respecting a full and perfect union.

The third Annual Conference was held at the Utica District School-house, Saline, Washtenaw Co., Oct. 10, 1843.

The fourth Annual Conference was held in the town of Adams, Hillsdale county, which dated its opening September 11, 1844.

In the first Annual Conference, the number in the ministry were only five, including stationed and unstationed.

The second Annual Conference presented an increase in the ministry, to the number of fifteen, including stationed and unstationed.

The third Annual Conference furnishes the statistics of the ministry, as follows:

Stationed, 17; Unstationed, 9; Reserve List, 6; Licentiates, 4; total, 36.

The fourth Conference presents the following statistics: Stationed, 23; Unstationed, 21; Reserve, 3; total, 47.

The first record of the number of members, in this State, is found in the journals of the third Annual Conference, which is formed as follows:

Half Creek and Manchester, 378; Saline circuit, 119; Wayne, 306; Leslie, 75; Jackson, 49; Batavia, 40; Milford circuit, 120; Greenfield, 18; Ionia, 12; total, 1,116.

Soon after the organization in this State, revivals broke out in Nankin and Livonia, Wayne Co., in which there were a number of conversions, the evidences of which, remain to this day. The same year, the Churches at Manchester and Wolf Creek, were favored with 'seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.' The same year, a gracious revival was experienced at Waterloo, Jackson Co., which resulted in the organization of a Church of about twenty-five members. The year after, while revivals continued, more or less, in the eastern part of the State, strengthening and building up the Churches there, they seemed to move, with tremendous power, to the west. In Hillsdale county, the towns of Adams, Wheatland, and Somersett, were visited with gracious revivals, in all of which towns, important and influential Churches, were organized. The year after, a revival was enjoyed at Allen Prairie, and at Quincy, in Branch Co., the fruits of which, were efficient societies in those places. The same year, 'mercy drops,' of the same kind as those mentioned above, were enjoyed far into the west and north, on the banks of the Kalamazoo and Grand Rivers. The above named revivals have all resulted from the labors of Wesleyan preachers. Revivals have been, and yet are estimated, by our Connection generally, as first in importance, as auxiliaries, to our progress in the State.

Much might, in truth, be said of our ministry, but for the present, I forbear, by remarking that our constant desire, and earnest prayer is, to have the favor of God, and more laborers, of a similar stamp with those we have.

Yours affectionately,

W. M. SULLIVAN."

Events have been anticipated, somewhat, by continuing this narrative, unbroken, to the close. But to return a year or two.

In Western Pennsylvania, there was organized, October 20, 1842, by J. P. Betker, John McElowney, sen., James Smith, James White, and John Bryant, a Society, or Church, embracing the principles, afterwards embodied in the discipline of

the Wesleyan Connection. From the date of this event, it will be seen that it occurred at the same period with similar events in a distant section of the country. The simultaneous organization of societies, based upon similar principles, indicated a general and deep-seated disaffection, which, ultimately combined, in the formation of a vigorous agency for carrying on the anti-slavery work, in the Church.

The secessions, before mentioned, attracted but little attention beyond their immediate precincts. The official papers of the M. E. Church, only named that in Utica, alleging that they had, by dishonest means, obtained possession of the meeting-house. This was afterwards retracted. Another secession was at hand, that was denounced by Methodist Episcopal papers, in anticipation.

In the Advocate and Journal of New-York for Nov. 9, 1842, Dr. Bond heralded the approaching secession thus :

"The agents of this great enterprise are, certain preachers who had grown so big that, as we had long ago foreseen, we, poor Methodists, could find no place among us, large enough for their accommodation. They have, at length, resolved to make a place for themselves, and we predict that they will, in the course of a year or two, be sweated down to natural-sized men, or be crushed to death by the fall of the building they are erecting. We claim no extraordinary sagacity in making this suggestion. The thing that has been is the thing which shall be. Wiser men, and men of more weight of character, have made the experiment which they are about to institute, and have always failed : but there is a vanity and self-confidence, on which even the lessons of experience are lost.

They will now hazard all for revenge ; assured they can do much mischief, though they cannot take off such a party as they once hoped would follow them. Our friends may now look out for popular addresses on liberty, in such style as they have never heard in churches before. For the liberty of which they will hear will be the utmost licentiousness, and the most violent abuse of all they have heretofore revered among the living and the dead. All ecclesiastical authority will be represented as tyranny, and the exercise of Church discipline by

pastors, will be denounced as despotism. Among the willing hearers, will be found the backslidden in heart, those who have lost the confidence of their brethren, and all who have heretofore incurred Church censures.

A new connection having no bond of union but ultra-abolition, may be commenced with a great flourish of trumpets, and die away in its own noise. The result inevitable from the necessary incongruity of the materials. Neither doctrine nor discipline can be settled by the heterogeneous mass which will come together."

Such was the introduction given to the "New Movement," that was expected. Those engaged in it could not complain of being unnoticed. The notice was distinct, palpable, anything but unnecessarily flattering. Of that quality, these remarks were free.

I have preferred that the secession of 1842, should be first introduced by its enemies. There is such a contrast between the thing itself, and the caricature given of it, that the judgment of all candid men will incline in its favor.

Instead of a combination, extending over a wide field, and including a large number of those who had been prominent in the anti-slavery agitation, as was confidently predicted, will be found a few individuals, in a quiet manner, announcing their withdrawal from the M. E. Church.

To these instances, and the results following, attention is now invited. In November, 1842, the first number of a paper styled, "The True Wesleyan," was issued, J. Horton and O. Scott, editors. On the first page was found the following:

"WITHDRAWAL FROM THE M. E. CHURCH."

"With the date of this communication, closes our connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church. We take this step after years of consideration, and with a solemn sense of our responsibility to God—we take it with a view to his glory and the salvation of souls.

Twenty years, and upwards, of the best part of our lives, has been spent in the service of this Church—during which time,

we have formed acquaintances which have endeared to our hearts multitudes of Christian friends. Many of these are true kindred spirits, and we leave them with reluctance. But the view we take of our responsibility is not local in its bearings, nor limited in its duration. While we live, and when we die, we wish to bear a testimony which shall run parallel with coming ages; nay, with the annals of eternity. Many considerations of friendship, as well as our temporal interests, bind us to the Church of our early choice. But for the sake of a high and holy cause, we can forego all these. We wish to live not for ourselves, nor for the present age alone, but for all coming time; nay, for God and eternity. We have borne our testimony, a long time, against what we considered wrong in the M. E. Church. We have waited, prayed, and hoped, until there is no longer any ground for hope. Hence we have come to the deliberate conclusion, that we must submit to things as they are, or peaceably retire. We have unhesitatingly chosen the latter.

It is, however, proper, in leaving the Church, that we assign our reasons. These are, mainly, the following:

1. The M. E. Church, is not only a slaveholding, but a slavery defending, Church.
2. The Government of the M. E. Church contains principles not laid down in the Scriptures, nor recognized in the usages of the primitive Church—principles which are subversive of the rights, both of ministers and laymen.

That the M. E. Church is a slaveholding Church, none will deny. It is not, of course, meant that slaves are a part of our church funds, though it is believed the fruits of slaveholding or of slave-buying and selling, make a large portion of these funds. But what we mean, is, that the M. E. Church allows her members and ministers unrebuked, to hold innocent human beings in a state of hopeless bondage—nay, more, that she upholds and defends her communicants in this abominable business! All her disciplinary regulations, which present a show of opposition to Slavery, are known and acknowledged to be a dead letter in the South. And they are as dead in the North as in the South. Even the general rule has been altered, either through carelessness or design, so as to favor the internal slave trade; and yet the last General Conference refused to correct the error, knowing it to be such!

This Church has defended, in a labored argument, through some of her best ministers, the present rightful relation of man-

ter and slave—in that she has never called them to account for putting forth such a document.

She has exhorted, through her regularly constituted agents and highest officers, the trustees of Methodist Churches, to close their pulpits against Methodist anti-slavery lecturers.

She has refused, in numerous instances, through her bishops, to entertain, in the Annual Conferences, motions expressive of the sinfulness of slaveholding—motions for the appointment of committees on Slavery—motions for the adoption of reports on Slavery; and that, because those motions and reports contained the sentiment, that slaveholding is sin—which, it was alleged, is contrary to Methodism, which recognizes and approves of the relation of master and slave under some circumstances.

She has refused, through her bishops, to hear the prayers of scores and hundreds of her members against Slavery, in some of the Annual Conferences.

She has refused to publish, in her official papers, several addresses of the British Wesleyan Conference, because they alluded to Slavery.

She has arraigned and condemned, without the forms of trial, members of her highest ecclesiastical assembly, for simply attending and speaking in an anti-slavery meeting.

She has condemned modern abolition, refusing, at the same time, to say, in the language of the discipline, that she is “as much as ever convinced of the great evil of Slavery.”

She has exhorted her ministers and members, throughout the country, “wholly to refrain” from this agitating subject.

She has said, through some of her Annual Conferences, that Slavery is not a moral evil—while she has repeatedly refused, through her bishops, to allow other annual conferences, to express the opposite sentiment.

She has allowed, without censure, one of her bishops to issue a labored address, in which an attempt is made to prove that slaveholding is not only justified, but enjoined, under some circumstances, by the Golden Rule! and she has published this address in her official papers.

She has, through her ministers and members, disfranchised and censured, or expelled, class-leaders, stewards, exhorters, and local preachers, for the simple crime of their abolition movements.

She has, through some of her annual conferences, prohibited

her ministers and preachers from patronizing anti-slavery papers.

She has refused to receive into some of her annual conferences, pious and talented young men on trial, for the simple reason, that they were active Abolitionists.

She has, through the same medium, arraigned, censured, suspended, and, in some instances, expelled her ministers, for contumacy and insubordination with respect to abolition ;—and some of these she has followed from year to year, by her bishops and members of other Conferences, for the evident purpose of destroying their ministerial character and influence ;—subjecting them to repeated, vexatious, and expensive trials.

She has, two or three times, altered her discipline to effect, as is believed, their expulsion.

She has removed presiding elders, from their districts, for their abolition movements ; suffering, as it would seem, this crime to effect the appointment of other ministers and preachers.

She has refused, in her General Conference capacity, to reaffirm her former language of opposition to Slavery, though requested to do this, by some thousands of her ministers and members. She has refused, in the same capacity, to take exceptions to the sentiment of two or three annual conferences, who have said that Slavery is not a moral evil.

And finally, she has adopted a resolution on colored testimony, which disfranchises eighty thousand of her members—thus giving the weight of her influence to that slaveholding legislation which, in a civil point of view, disfranchises millions of our fellow countrymen.

Add to this, the fact, that all her official papers, are so much under the influence of slaveholding, that no Abolitionist can be heard on the subject of Slavery and abolition, however he may be abused, traduced and misrepresented.

In view of these facts, we ask, is not the M. E. Church, one of the main supporters of Slavery in this country ? Has she not defended it in almost every conceivable way ? And is there any prospect that this Church will ever be reformed, so long as Slavery exists in the country ? If not, can we obey the commands of God, and continue in fellowship with a Church which receives, shields and defends, thousands and tens of thousands, who, according to Mr. Wesley, are ‘exactly on a level with men-stealers ?’ If a large portion of our ministers and mem-

bers were sheep-stealers or horse-stealers, there would be more propriety in covering them;—but when we consider that they make merchandise of the souls and bodies of men, or do that which is tantamount to such a traffic, without rebuke, how can we co-operate with them in the great work of reforming the world? Others must judge for themselves, but we feel it our duty to ‘come out of her’—to ‘have no fellowship,’ or connection, ‘with the unfruitful works of darkness,’ but to ‘come out from among them and be separate!’ By this course, we solemnly believe, we can do more for the cause of the bleeding slave, than by continuing in a Slavery-defending Church, when there can be no hope of reforming her till the country is reformed. But,

2d. The government of the M. E. Church contains principles not laid down in the Scriptures, nor recognized in the usages of the primitive Church—principles which are subversive of the rights both of ministers and laymen.

While we admit that no form of Church government is laid down in the Scriptures, we contend that, principles are laid down which are in direct contravention with some existing forms.

That the Roman Catholic form is of this class, all will admit. The claims of high churchmen are believed to be equally unfounded. And though the objectionable features in our form of Church government are less wide of the mark, yet they are as truly unauthorized as anything in either of the above mentioned forms.

Both Scripture and primitive usage, recognize Christians in the light of one great brotherhood—possessing essentially the same rights, subject only to one master. True, pastors and people, have their peculiar and distinctive duties, but there is to be no ‘lording it over God’s heritage.’

From the Scriptures, it is evident that, even in the times of the apostles, laymen were members of the highest councils of the Church, and Lord King clearly proves that this was the usage of the Christian Church for several ages. It follows, therefore, that the contrary practice is not only without scripture and usage, but contrary thereto. That separation between ministers and laymen, which exists in the M. E. Church, owes its origin to the assumptions of Rome! It exists, we believe, in no other Church. Even the Episcopalian Church, in this country, cannot elect a bishop without the concurrence of a board of laymen!

The power which our bishops claim and exercise, in the Annual Conferences, is contrary to the plainest principles of Christian responsibility. All religious associations must, in the nature of things, have the right to express, without restraint, their opinions on any moral question. But this, no annual or quarterly conference, in the M. E. Church, can do, without the consent of the bishop or presiding elder. But no body of Christian men has any more right to submit to such restraints, than they have to commit the entire keeping of their consciences to other hands. That holy men of God should consent, in this enlightened age, to exercise such power over the consciences of their brethren, is truly astonishing ! but not more so, than that ministers can be found who will peaceably submit to such innovations upon their responsibilities to God !?

Scarcely less objectionable, is the power conferred upon the bishops of the M. E. Church, in the appointment of the preachers. That the entire destinies of three or four thousand men should be in the hands of some five or six bishops, so far as their fields of labor are concerned, seems to be forbidden by the fact that, these bishops are fallible men—that they are often ignorant both of the preachers and people ; and that they cannot control the openings of Providence, and the calls of God. We know the presiding elders are usually called upon for advice in this matter ; but there is no obligation on the part of the Episcopacy to advise with any one. And when all must admit that it would be dangerous for the bishops to exercise the power they possess, what advantage can there be in their possessing such power ? If it be wrong to rob our fellow-creatures, how can it be right to possess the legal power to do this ? But that the bishops will ever be curtailed in their prerogatives, in this respect, there is not the least ground to hope, when it is considered, that after those in the General Conference, who were in favor of some reform in this respect, had toiled for thirty years, namely, from 1790 to 1820, and when, having finally succeeded in carrying a small compromise measure, by a vote of more than two-thirds of the General Conference, the whole measure was defeated by the minority, including two bishops—though one was but a bishop elect.

This measure only provided, that, when presiding elders were wanted, the bishop should nominate three times the number wanted, out of whom the conference should elect the requisite number—and the presiding elders thus constituted, were to be

made an advisory council in stationing the preachers. This was not what a large portion of the General Conference wanted, but what they consented to take, as a compromise measure. But Episcopacy would not be curtailed in this respect. And yet some of our friends talk about reforming the Church, in her government. Impossible ! This can never be done. History and facts are all against the indulgence of such a hope. Could we see the most distant prospect of any material change for the better, we would wait and patiently labor. We say now, as we have often said, that reform, and not revolution, is our wish. But no important Church reform ever yet took place in the entire body ; though by secessions, the monster, power, has been checked in his progressive career. What would the state of the world now have been, with respect to popery, had it not been for Luther and the Reformation ? Who can tell to what lengths tyranny would have been carried ere this, had there been no opposition ? no secession ?

If the Presiding Elders were a legal council to station the preachers, the case would be bettered but little, in some respects at least, inasmuch as they are created by the bishop alone, and entirely dependent on him for their office. They, therefore, would be mere echoes of his will.

Connected with this unrestricted stationing authority, which the bishop possesses, is the power to transfer preachers to any part of the United States, to Texas, or to Africa—and that too, not only without their consent, but against their will ! Thus, for instance, for the simple crime of abolition, a brother may be placed by the bishop where, in all probability, he would be put either out of the Church, or out of the world. For, he may be transferred to a Southern Conference, to which if he does not go, he would lose his membership in the Church ; and where, if he does go, he would be liable to lose his life. It is not enough to say, in reply to this, that there is no power that this power will ever be exercised, because its would be wrong ;—for, how can it be right to possess power, if it would be wrong to exercise it ? And, besides, when a majority of an annual conference becomes, in the judgment of the bishop, heterodox, how can it be known that the members will not be distributed where they will lose, to say least, their membership ? Has not the possibility, if not probability, of such a result, already been more than intimated from the highest authority ?

Another serious objection to Methodist Episcopacy, is the election of bishops for life. Both Bishop Hedding and Dr. Luckey, have expressed the opinion, that the office of bishop may be periodically elective, and that the ceremony of ordination may be dispensed with; and, that too, without invalidating any of the essentials of Episcopacy. But now once a bishop always bishop, however incapacitated to the performance of the duties of the office from bodily or mental infirmities. But we have not time to enlarge on any of these topics.

We will mention but one thing more. And that is, that feature in the economy of the Methodist E. Church, which gives the power to the preacher, of excluding almost any member he may wish to get rid of. True, the discipline requires the forms of trial, in case of expulsion; but as the preacher has the sole power to appoint the Committee, and that without giving the accused any right of challenge, it is not, in general, difficult, for a preacher to punish whom he pleases, and that for trifling causes, as many can testify. And, as he has the sole right to appoint all the leaders, and nominate all the stewards, it is of but little consequence for an expelled member to appeal to the Quarterly-meeting Conference, if the preacher is known to be strongly prejudiced against him—however unfounded that prejudice may be.

Such, in brief, are some of our reasons for leaving the M. E. Church. We shall have more to say, on these matters, hereafter.

We wish it may be distinctly understood, that we do not withdraw from anything essential to pure Wesleyan Methodism. We only dissolve our connection with Episcopacy and Slavery. These we believe to be anti-Scriptural, and well calculated to sustain each other.

There are many valuable things in the economy of Methodism; these we shall adhere to. And this we can do without having any connection with what is worse than objectionable. We know it will be said, God has greatly blessed the Church, and is evidently still owning her, and, therefore, we ought not to disturb her peace by any discussions of her polity. The same remark may be made in regard to Slavery. And yet, who will pretend either that Slavery is right, because God has so wonderfully blessed the Church, or that, for this reason, we should refrain from agitating her with discussions on the subject? We ask who? for we all know that anti-abolitionists

have used this very argument. Abolitionists, however, have considered it unsound. Let them, then, be careful how they take precisely the same ground in relation to another matter. True, God has blessed us; but this is not, perhaps, so much owing to our Slavery and Episcopacy, as to the evangelical character of our doctrines and our zeal. And let us not forget that he has blessed other Churches too.

Should it be said that God has frowned upon all who have left the Church—it might be replied, in the first place, that this is not the fact. Some of the secessions from the Church, are prospering as well, in proportion to their means, as the M. E. Church. And, secondly, if it were true, it would not prove that the act of their leaving the Church was displeasing to God—much less would it prove, that no circumstances can exist, which will make a secession justifiable.

Though we entertain none other but kind feelings towards those we leave, yet we expect to be ill-treated by our former friends. We know how it has been with others who have left. To lose ministers and members is a mortification to sectarian pride. Those who will defend the Church and her usages, are fine fellows; but the moment they leave her communion, no reproachful epithets are too bad to heap upon them. Their motives are impugned, and their honesty questioned. And this, for effect, is sometimes done in advance! But we have counted the cost, and are prepared to suffer persecution. By whatever spirit some of our opponents may be actuated, we hope to be saved from all unkind expressions.

Though but three of us sign this document, scores, if not hundreds, to our certain knowledge, might have easily been obtained. We did not wish any other names now. There will be an opportunity for all who may desire it, to follow our example. We shall not be disappointed if but few do this. We have no anxiety on this ground. We act for ourselves. Knowing, however, that there are hundreds, if not thousands, who entertain the same sentiments we do, we have prepared an outline of discipline or plan of operation—a summary of which will be given in the paper containing this withdrawal. The entire plan will soon be published. It will be seen from the summary, that we have made provision to organize the churches, if there is a call for it.

And now, dear brethren of the M. E. Church, we bid you farewell. Many of you we know and love. And while we do

not impeach your motives or honesty, we hope, in turn, you will not treat us as barbarians. There is room enough for us all. Let us have no unchristian contention.

JOTHAM HORTON,
ORANGE SCOTT,
LA ROY SUNDERLAND."

Providence, R. I., Nov. 8, 1842.

CHAPTER II.

THE TRUE WESLEYAN ISSUED—FOUNTAIN-STREET CHURCH, PROVIDENCE—VARIOUS SECESSIONS—ANDOVER CONVENTION—CHURCHES ORGANIZED—LOWELL AFFAIRS REVIEWED—UTICA CONVENTION, CALL, ORGANIZATION, ROLL; PECULIARITIES OF WESLEYANISM CONTRASTED WITH THE METHODIST E. ECONOMY.

Unless specially informed, the reader would hardly suppose that the last withdrawal, in the previous chapter, was the movement anticipated, with such a flourish, by the editor of the C. Advocate. But such is the fact. Those individuals, in their withdrawal, intimated that, from the known sentiments of hundreds and thousands, many others might be disposed to unite with them, and in anticipation of it, arrangements were made, to organize Churches, if there was a call for it.

The second number of the "True Wesleyan," was issued in Boston, in December of the year 1842, and after that, weekly, dating from Jan. 7, 1843. It contained the withdrawal of Luther Lee, then resident at Andover, for some time a distinguished member of the Black River Conference. It also announced, that two Churches had been organized in Providence, R. I. The larger one, embracing over a hundred members, who owned a beautiful and commodious meeting-house, worth six thousand dollars. The history of that Church, is so intimately

connected with the anti-slavery struggle, and so interesting withal, that I will introduce here a narrative of it.

During the year 1841, the Chestnut-st. Church, Providence, was destitute of a pastor some months. W. H. Brewster, of the New-Hampshire Conference, by the request of the Church, and with the consent of the Presiding Elder on that district, was employed to serve them until the ensuing Providence Conference. This was three months after. A unanimous request was made, for the Bishop to transfer him to that station for the ensuing year. He objected, that Mr. Brewster could not be spared from New-Hampshire. A distinguished minister offered to go to New-Hampshire in his stead. The Bishop then said, that his character might not pass. But his character did pass. Having traveled far at some expense, he was not willing to remove again, and desired to remain somewhere in the Providence Conference. Yet, contrary to his request, and the wishes of the Church, he was not transferred nor appointed to that station. The reasons for that refusal were not given. Many were conjectured by those who were painfully disappointed. The open and vigorous anti-slavery position of Mr. Brewster, was supposed to be one reason. This, and other grounds of dissatisfaction on the subject of Slavery, induced forty-one members to withdraw and form another Methodist Episcopal Church, in a new part of the city.

This was in the summer of 1841. Their meetings were held in an old school-house for several months. Soon after their organization, Jotham Horton, late a leading member of the New-England Conference, was chosen pastor.

A remark in explanation would not be amiss here. Mr. Horton, for many years, had served the Methodist Episcopal Church in New-England, by the appointment of the bishops, in most if not all the important stations, including Bangor, Lynn, Lowell, Worcester and Boston. In common with others, he had also occupied many a field of labor, affording but a scanty support and requiring much self-denial. At the Conference,

held in Worcester for 1841, he requested the Bishop to accommodate him with an appointment in the vicinity of Boston, for the sake of his family. This request was denied, and he found himself under the necessity of taking a location. Thus he was free to accept the invitation of the Providence Church.

In a communication to the True Wesleyan, published, Feb. 10, 1844, a Committee of that Church, report their character and condition. I quote it in part :

" Our Church withdrew, from all connection with the M. E. Church, on Sabbath afternoon, Dec. 25, 1842. We are rather jealous of our distinction, as ' The first Wesleyan Church in New-England.'

One fact in our history, we remember with feelings of pleasure and honest pride. Our Church was the first home of those who led the way in leaving a pro-slavery Episcopal organization from a firm adherence to principle, though at the loss of all things, by many deemed too valuable to part with, for truth's sake. From us have gone out such men as J. Horton, O. Scott, L. R. Sunderland, and Luther Lee, to spread scriptural holiness through these lards, and build up a purer Church, on Wesleyan principles.

In reviewing the past, we have, as a Church, much occasion for encouragement and gratitude. About two years since, we numbered 41 members, and held our meetings in the Summer-st. School-house, an old building, the use of which was freely granted us by the city. Now we number more than one hundred members, and occupy a neat and commodious meeting-house, built during Bro. Horton's administration, with a congregation slowly, but steadily, increasing in numbers and permanence.

S. R. JACKSON,
A. B. CURRY,
B. ARNOLD, JR."

Providence, Jan. 26, 1844.

The second number contained, also, an article from "The Spirit of Liberty," edited by Edward Smith of Pittsburgh, approving the "New Movement," although his formal withdrawal did not take place, until April 10, 1843. His unjust suspension from the ministry is already known to the reader.

In the same number of the paper, notice was given of a Convention to be held in Andover, Mass., Feb. 1, 1843. All, both ministers and laymen, in favor of the ultimate formation of a Wesleyan Methodist Church, free from Episcopacy and Slavery, were invited to attend and become members of the Convention. This call was signed by J. Horton, L. Lee, O. Scott, and L. R. Sunderland.

The ensuing number of the Wesleyan, contained the withdrawal of the writer, then stationed in the city of Boston.

All the facts, respecting secession, are obtained, mainly, from the Wesleyan. Hereafter, I shall give a statement of the facts without reference, particularly, to the paper. A brief sketch is all sufficient. The following secessions occurred at the times specified :

At Troy, Ohio, R. Brandriff, a superannuated preacher of the Ohio Annual Conference, and twenty-two others, presented their withdrawal to the preacher in charge, Saturday evening, Jan. 7. I give an extract from the document :

"It may be proper, in leaving the Church with which we have been associated, that we assign some of the reasons which have induced us to this course.

The Methodist E. Church has ceased to be an anti-slavery Church, and has become, emphatically, a slaveholding and slavery-defending Church.

We hold, that the members of a Church are properly chargeable for all the errors of the Church, in doctrine or practice, until they use their influence to effect a reformation. We are not permitted to discuss the sinfulness of Slavery in our periodicals, but we are commanded 'wholly to refrain.' We are not permitted to meet in our own Church, which we have helped to build, by a liberal contribution of our money, religiously to consider the subject of Slavery, and to pray for the slave; not even to pray that he may be permitted to read the Bible. We cannot freely exercise our duty to pray for the slave, or the slaveholder, in the regular meetings of the Church, without feeling that we are sneered at by our brethren as Abolitionists; and we have the infelicity to know, that our sympathies excite the contempt of our brethren, from the fact that our ministers

sincerely ever pray for the slave. All this, and much more, we have borne, and would continue to bear, if we could hope that the Church could ever be reformed; but we cannot longer dream of such a state of things."

The next day being the Sabbath, they met in a school-room and organized a Church.

At Seneca Falls, N. Y., prior to this date, a small company had also withdrawn, and awaited a general organization.

In Boston, Mass., a small Church was organized, made up of seceders from several Churches, under the care of Jotham Horton, who had resigned his pastoral relation to the Providence Church. Their organisation was consummated, Jan. 8, 1843. It was the Sabbath. Rev. J. Horton preached from these words: "In the name of our God we will lift up our banners." In the afternoon, Rev. O. Scott preached. His topic or theme was embraced in the words, "The little one shall become a thousand."

After the services, Wm. Blakemore was chosen Secretary. The Church was then organized, and numbered twelve members. Wm. Holmes was chosen their first Steward. This Church has had to contend with the most serious difficulties, in order to maintain itself in a city so aristocratic as Boston. But while it contains such brethren as have stood by it from the first, and now sustain it, there is no doubt of ultimate success.

January 16, 1843, the M. E. Church, in Leyden, Mass., with their pastor, John Tats, withdrew from that communion and took the name of Wesleyan Methodists, and appointed a Committee "to make arrangements to unite with a Church free from the great abominations of intemperance and slavery."

Many letters from individuals, were received at Boston, from all parts of the country, announcing their secession on anti-slavery grounds. These are not quoted to avoid protracting, needlessaly, this narrative.

The Convention, called at Andover, was held, Feb. 1, 1843. I give the doings, from the published report, somewhat in detail,

as it was the first meeting, and preliminary to the organization of the Connection of Wesleyans' in America.

"The Wesleyan Anti-Slavery Convention, appointed to be held in Andover, Mass., met according to appointment, and was called to order by Rev. Jotham Horton, of Boston. The Hon. Seth Sprague, sen., was then appointed Chairman, pro tem., and L. C. Matlack, Secretary, pro tem. The Convention was opened with prayer by the Secretary; after which, the 'Call' was read, and all persons agreeing with the objects therein set forth, were requested, by vote, to give their names as members of the Convention.

The following persons were chosen a Committee to nominate officers for the Convention, viz: J. Horton, O. Scott, J. Kimball, S. R. Jackson, and J. K. Wellman. Their report was as follows:

For President, Hon. Seth Sprague, Jr., of Duxbury.

For Vice-Presidents, Hon. Seth Sprague, sen., of Duxbury, and Rev. J. Horton, of Boston.

For Secretaries, L. C. Matlack, of Providence, R. I., and P. R. Sawyer, of Princeton, Mass.

The above nominations were confirmed by the Convention.

The President, after taking the chair, entertained the Convention with some appropriate remarks in reference to the favorable characteristics, which distinguish this secession from the Methodist E. Church.

A Committee, to prepare business for the Convention was appointed, consisting of the following brethren: L. Lee, J. Horton, J. Tate, B. Arnold, Jr., Z. King, S. R. Jackson, J. Kimball, J. Haven, and O. Scott.

While this Committee were preparing business, the Hon. Seth Sprague, sen., addressed the Convention, in a very interesting manner, with reference to the important objects for which this Convention was called."

A series of resolutions were discussed, and unanimously adopted, part of which are quoted. They relate to Church discipline and future action. The resolutions not quoted, have been before the reader in other forms.

"Resolved, That the government of the M. E. Church, as contained in the discipline, and explained and administered by

its Episcopacy, is anti-republican, and is, in principle, an encroachment upon natural rights, and in its administration subversive, not only of true Christian liberty, but frequently of the sacred right of conscience.

Resolved, That the power which the bishops of the M. E. Church have wielded against the sacred cause of the bleeding slave, and the success with which they have resisted its true and holy principles, and retarded its progress in the M. E. Church, have not only convinced us of the danger of confiding such unlimited power to individual men, however correct in principle and pure in heart we may regard them at the time, but has alarmed us for the safety of the people's rights, under such a system, whenever a question arises between the governed and the power that governs.

Resolved, That a sense of duty to God; the obligation resting upon us to do what we can to preserve the purity of Christianity; a love for the enjoyment of true Christian liberty, and a desire to leave this blessing as an inheritance for our children, induces us to call upon all, of the same views and feelings, to unite with us in the organization of a Wesleyan Methodist Church, free from Slavery and Episcopacy.

Resolved, That we recommend to our friends throughout the non-slaveholding States, who entertain the views set forth in the foregoing resolutions, to assemble in General Convention at Utica, in the State of New-York, on Wednesday, the 31st day of May next—for the purpose of effecting the organization contemplated in the preceding resolution, and for the adoption of such measures as may be deemed necessary to carry the same into effective operation.

Resolved, That the Convention approve of the formation of those Wesleyan Methodist Societies which have already been organized, and that it be recommended that such societies be formed, without further delay, in all places where it is practicable, preparatory for the general organization proposed in the preceding resolution.

Resolved, That a Committee of correspondence be appointed, whose duty it shall be to advise with, and provide for the temporary supply of such societies, so far as they may be able; and that all such societies as may desire their advice or assistance, and all preachers who are willing to aid, or desirous of being employed, by way of supplying such societies, be invited

to correspond with said Committee. [J. Horton, O. Scott, L. Lee, were that committee.]

Resolved, That while as Methodists, we adhere to that form of Christian truth embodied in the doctrines taught by the venerable John Wesley, we believe ourselves fully authorized, in the formation of a Church polity, to 'follow the Scriptures and the primitive Church.'

Resolved, That while no particular form of Church government is laid down in the Scriptures, the principles which should be recognized in every form, are in those Scriptures clearly revealed,—and that among those principles the right of the laity to a voice in the government of the Church, stands out as prominently as any other.

Resolved, That Mr. Wesley, in appointing Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury, to the work of superintending the American Methodist Societies, did not design to create an American Methodist Episcopacy, invested with the prerogatives now held by that office.

Resolved, That a Committee of six be appointed to prepare and publish, in the 'True Wesleyan,' the form of a Discipline for the Wesleyan Methodist Church in the United States, subject to the action of a General Convention; and also prepare an address to our abolition brethren whom we have left behind in the M. E. Church, on the impropriety of remaining in the communion of a pro-slavery Church, and one whose government is anti-scriptural.

[L. Lee, J. Horton, O. Scott, Wm. Blakemore, Seth Sprague, Jr., and S. R. Jackson, were chosen as that committee.]

Whereas, we have been informed that some twenty preachers and six hundred members have, during the last year seceded from the M. E. Church, in the State of Michigan, calling themselves Wesleyan Methodists,—and whereas, we have also learned that it was their wish to unite with their Eastern brethren, therefore,

Resolved, That our Wesleyan brethren in Michigan, be earnestly requested to send a full representation to the General Convention to be held at Utica, N. Y., May 31st, for the purpose of assisting in the general organization, that all the Wesleyan Methodists in the United States, may form one Connection.

Resolved, That all other Wesleyan Methodist Churches who

do now, or may hereafter exist, be invited to send representatives to the General Convention.

Resolved, That should circumstances arise, which, in the judgment of the Committee of Correspondence, should require an alteration either in the time or place of holding the General Convention, they be authorized to make such alteration, provided suitable notice be given.

Resolved, That the Committee of Correspondence be authorized to call local conventions, wherever it may be deemed expedient, prior to the contemplated Convention in the spring or summer; and if absolutely necessary to the interests of the cause, to change the time and place fixed upon for said Convention.

LUCIUS C. MATLAOK,
PORTER R. SAWYER,
Secretaries.

The incipient stages of a new organization were now begun. The position of the seceders on ecclesiastical economy, as well as on moral principles, was well defined. The judgment passed upon their course, may be known, in part, by the ensuing secessions, now to be narrated.

The Methodist Society at Rockport, Cape Ann, Mass., with their pastor, voted to dissolve their connection with the M. E. Church, and unite with the Wesleyans, Feb. 7, 1843.

About this period, information was received of the formation of a Church in Penn Yan, N. Y.; one in Bellville, Ohio, of sixty members; one in Athol, Mass., of thirty members; and one in Lisbon, N. Y., which soon numbered one hundred members.

Of the last, the following extract from a letter by the pastor, Lyndon King, to the Presiding Elder of Potsdam District, gives the particulars:

"P. S. Yesterday, we organized a 'Wesleyan Methodist Church' here, embracing all our official members except one, and about sixty other members, who request me to inform you that they have dissolved their connection with the M. E. Church. There are probably less than a dozen members of the

M. E. Church on this charge, who will not unite with the 'Wesleyan Methodist Church.'"

Of the movement in Ohio, a letter dated Feb 16, remarks:

"DEAR BROTHER SCOTT,—In Piqua the brethren have left. Among them is Brother Ogden, a member for many years of the Philadelphia Conference; Bro. Jordan, who replied to Bro. Sullivan, a short time ago, in the Watchman, urging him (Bro. S.) not to secede; Bro. Scudder, the founder and apostle of Methodism in Piqua; and our worthy Bro. Gordon, who, sometime ago, emancipated his slaves. On Saturday and Sabbath, we hold a two-days' Wesleyan meeting. About twenty of our brethren from this place will be there.

An entire Church has seceded in Carthagena, Mercer Co., and Shadrach Green with them. The building was so constructed that it belongs, without any litigation, to the seceders. Bro. Stephens, a local preacher from an adjoining society, has also left.

In Dayton, there is a colored Wesleyan Methodist Church of thirty-one members."

The Society at Exeter, N. H., withdrew also during this month, as set forth in the following resolutions:

"Resolved, That immediate secession, or withdrawal, from the M. E. Church, is the only safe and sure ground for the extirpation of Slavery; therefore, we do hereby separate ourselves from said Church.

Resolved, That we leave with no unkind feelings towards any of our brethren, who remain in the M. E. Church.

Resolved, That a Committee of three be appointed to write a report of this meeting, and forward the same for publication in the True Wesleyan.

JOHN P. PAYSON,
WILLIAM GORDEN,
GILMAN RAND,
Committee.

Bro. Scott: I will take the liberty to add, further, that the Church were unanimous in the passage of the resolutions. The one which dissolves our connection with the M. E. Church, was taken by kneeling before God and giving ourselves up to him, seeking his guidance and blessing.

The meeting-house not being deeded to Conference, is in our possession, and all will go on harmoniously.

Your brother, J. P. PAYSON.

In Cedarville, Ohio, twenty persons united under the following pledge, in March, 1843 :

"We, the subscribers, hereby pledge ourselves to aid each other in a Christian walk and conversation, and maintenance of Gospel institutions to the best of our abilities while we continue in our present state of withdrawal from the M. E. Church, until we can be regularly organized as a branch of the regular Wesleyan Church."

The formation of the "First Wesleyan Church, Lowell, Mass.," was announced by Orange Scott, in the True Wesleyan of March 25, of the same year.

The causes of disaffection in Lowell, present a series of interesting events reaching back to the summer of 1840. They relate, more especially, to the ecclesiastical economy of the Church, which, however, developed its offensiveness first, in relation to the anti-slavery discussion. Having been a member of the Quarterly Conference of St. Paul's station, Lowell, during the period to which I refer, and intimate with the members of that Church until now, I can give, from personal knowledge, a narrative of the facts. They are these :

At the last Quarterly-meeting Conference for that station, prior to the Annual Conference of 1840, a series of resolutions, prepared by Wm. North, sen., were presented to the meeting for adoption. The following is a copy of them :

"Whereas, the General Conference of the M. E. Church, held in Baltimore, in May, 1840, passed sundry resolutions which we believe are derogatory to the Christian spirit—and which substantially deprive every lay-member in the Church of his right and privilege of suffrage, and especially the colored brethren, who are deprived of their personal security and safety; And, whereas, we, as a portion of that Church, are now suffering the just reproach of those high-handed, heaven-daring measures—therefore,

Resolved, That we utterly deny the right of the General Conference to authorize the Presidents of our Annual or Quarterly Conferences to dictate, or determine conclusively, the kind of business that shall be brought before them, or prevent a free discussion and expression on such subjects as the members shall think proper to act upon.

Resolved, That we believe the attempt to invest the Presidents of our Annual or Quarterly Conferences with such powers, is contrary to all parliamentary rules among civilized men, where a representation is admitted—is subversive of the dearest rights of the laity, and is without a parallel, except in the annals of popery and despots.

Resolved, That casting out and excluding seventy thousand brethren from our Church tribunals, who will be competent witnesses in the great day of judgment, (for God hath received them), exposed to all the insult and injury that malevolence can invent—and placing beyond the avail of appeal—importunity or redress, will blacken the page of history, and do despite to the spirit of God.

Resolved, That while our nation and our Church thus continue to rob, afflict and oppress, with the heaviest oppression, a portion of our race, and of God's chosen people, we cannot hope to avert the just judgment of heaven upon us."

The Presiding Elder, Bartholemew Otheman, refused to let the Conference vote on these resolutions, and abruptly adjourned the Conference with the benediction. But no one left the room but himself. O. Scott, preacher in charge, was called to the chair; and the resolutions were passed, by a rising vote, unanimously. There was present, in all, near thirty official members.

A resolution was added declaring that they would not pay a Presiding Elder, who denied them the right to express an opinion on the action of the General Conference, or the subject of Slavery.

The session of the New-England Conference commenced soon after, in the city of Lowell. The writer was recommended, from that Church, for admission into the traveling ministry. When my case was presented to the Conference, these resolu-

tions were introduced against me, as I had voted for them. The effect was, an excited discussion, in which many things were said against my admission, but more against the Quarterly Conference with whom I acted.

Before the Conference adjourned that day, Bishop Soule appointed a meeting of the official board for the evening. We met. Bishops Hedding and Soule were present. They labored hard to induce the "Board" to retract, explain, or qualify their action. But it was in vain. And after 12 o'clock at night, the Bishops' retired. Bishop Soule said as he stood in the doorway: "To these brethren I will now say, that their action has arrayed them against the authorities of the Church, and with my present light I do not now see, how I can consistently appoint a preacher to this charge."

The next day, he appointed a meeting of the male members to be held in the evening. But they sustained the action of the Quarterly Conference, although the Bishop and others, labored until midnight to persuade them to adopt a contrary course. Notwithstanding all this, Orange Scott was appointed to that station. But an impression was made on the Bishop's mind, and an influence exerted upon the Church, not easy to be effaced. Time proved it.

During this year, the health of the pastor, O. Scott, failed, and the Church was served by Abram D. Merrill, until the Conference met in July, 1841. The Church then requested to be left unsupplied by the Bishop. But he appointed Rev. J. A. Merrill. This the brethren thought oppressive and a violation of their rights, to which it was inconsistent for them to submit, and accordingly the official Board met, and after exchanging views on the subject, passed the following resolution:

"Resolved, That though we have the utmost confidence in the Rev. Joseph A. Merrill, and though we should have rejoiced in his appointment to this station, had we requested the appointment of a preacher from Conference, yet as we had requested to be left to be supplied, having made a arrangement with the Rev. S. Hoad to supply us, and

as there are important principles involved in this arrangement, we must, however reluctantly, decline to receive Bro. Merrill the present Conference year."

This resolution was passed by yeas and nays, and the vote stood, yeas 33—nays 5. After the passage of the resolution, it was voted to lay the resolution, with a statement of the facts, before the whole Church, males and females, and let them, by vote, affirm or reject it. Accordingly, on the following Sabbath, the Church members were all requested to stop after the close of the afternoon service, and they were told what the brethren had done, and were requested by vote to confirm or reject it. The resolution being read and a rising vote taken, of males and females, the whole Church present, it was carried, nine only voting in the opposition.

Soon after this, a large meeting of the Society was held, and Orange Scott, then resident in Newbury, Vt., was chosen pastor. Subsequently, Luther Lee, then editing the New-England Christian Advocate in Lowell, occupied the desk. In Zion's Herald of Aug. 25, 1841, J. A. Merrill, the rejected preacher and his colleague, made a communication to the public, from which the following are extracts:

"Persons connecting themselves with the M. E. Church, voluntarily give up the right of selecting their ministers; and preachers uniting with the itinerant ministry, relinquish their right of choosing their congregations; and this is understood to be done, both by ministers and people, in consideration of the advantages and privileges secured to them by the itinerancy; The people have a right to petition and ask for particular ministers, and it is the acknowledged duty of the stationing authorities to consider and grant these petitions, so far as it can be done consistently with the interests of the whole work, and of these authorities must judge. Both the preachers and people have a right to petition, but to select and demand is not Methodism.

* * * * *

Upon the whole, then, if the exposition we have given of the doctrine of Methodism be correct, if the brethren referred to, have transcended or rejected the authorities of the Church, as

the facts adduced abundantly show—and if the efforts made to bring back these brethren to Methodist ground have proved unavailing, we must conclude, that they have departed from Methodism, and have seceded or withdrawn from the Methodist Episcopal Church. This is the position, therefore, which they now sustain to the Church.

We would have it distinctly understood, that although the brethren referred to, are not, while maintaining their present position, recognized as members of the M. E. Church, yet such as shall, within what we judge to be a reasonable time, signify to us their desire so to be considered, and satisfy us that they will adhere to the regulations of the Church while they are members, will have their names attached to such classes as it may be most convenient for them to attend.

From the attention we have given the whole subject, we are satisfied that what we have written, is literally and substantially correct.

J. A. MERRILL,
A. D. SARGENT,

Preachers in charge of the M. E. Churches in Lowell.

Having heard the foregoing read, and having knowledge of many of the most important facts referred to, I believe such facts to be correctly stated; the doctrine of the M. E. Church in regard to stationing preachers truly exhibited; and agree that the seceding brethren sustain the position to the M. E. Church as above declared.

P. CRANDALL, P. E."

Thus were a large number of Christians excluded from Church fellowship, by the act of those whom they never acknowledged as their pastors, those only being excepted, who should submit to their authority at their discretion; i. e. "within what we judge to be, a reasonable time." And all this was endorsed by the Presiding Elder, and confirmed by Bishops Heddle and Waugh. The first, stated that he could appoint no one to St. Paul's, until Mr. Merrill should recall his declaration, pronouncing them out of the Church, as it was an official act with which he could not interfere; and the latter, in hearing of the writer, expressed a similar opinion at the Springfield Conference of 1842, in answer to sundry questions proposed by J. A. Merrill.

Further detail is unnecessary. No one will be surprised at the fact of secession, within two years, or that it took away "two-thirds of the male members, two superintendants, and fifteen teachers of the Sabbath-school, and eight or ten of the class leaders."

During the spring of 1843, small Wesleyan Churches were formed in Cincinnati, O., Chestnut Ridge, N. Y., New-York city, Columbia, O., Russel, O., New-Garden, Ia., Sandusky City, O., Piqua, O., Syracuse, N.Y., Elkland, Pa., Pittsburgh, Pa., Worthington, Mass., Springfield, Mass., North Ferrisburg, Vt., and many other places hereafter to be mentioned.

Besides these, several individual secessions occurred, prior to the Utica Convention, of whom may be mentioned, Samuel Salsbury and John Watson, from the Genesee Conference; Cyrus Prindle, of the Troy Conference, a deservedly popular minister in the M. E. Church, for twenty-two year; his brother Lyman Prindle, E. S. Potter, of Hadley, Mass., Wm. P. White, of the N. E. Conference, and Geo. May and Alanson Latham, two of the ablest members of the Providence Conference. With these sketches of secessions up to May, 1843, the way is prepared to present to notice the call for the Utica Convention, with the proceedings thereof.

"C A L L."

"The undersigned were appointed at the Andover Convention, held Feb. 1, 1843, a Committee to fix upon the most suitable place, and issue a call for a General Convention, to be held on the 31st of May, to form a Wesleyan Methodist Church. Pursuant to the above appointment, we now announce that the Convention will be held at Utica, N. Y., at that time. All seceding Methodists, and other Christian believers, who are in favor of forming a Church free from Episcopacy and Slavery, and embracing a system of itinerancy, under proper limitations and restrictions, with such disciplinary regulations as are necessary to preserve and promote experimental and practical godliness, are invited to be present and co-operate with us, in the formation of such Church.

J. Horton, O. Scott, L. Lee, S. Sprague, Jr., W. Blakemore,
S. R. Jackson.

"The Convention met. It was called to order by Rev. J. Horton—Rev. O. Scott was appointed Chairman, pro tem., and Rev. L. R. Sunderland was appointed Secretary, pro tem. Prayer was then offered by Rev. Cyrus Prindle, late of the Troy Conference. A Committee was then appointed to nominate officers for the Convention, consisting of L. Lee, J. Jones, W. Wiggin, L. Prindle, L. C. Matlack, C. W. Moore, J. Watson, R. McMurdy, and M. Swift. The Committee, after a short absence, reported the following names:

For President, O. Scott; for Vice-Presidents, E. Smith and J. Horton; for Secretaries, R. McMurdy and P. R. Sawyer.

The Convention now being fully organized, proceeded to the appointment of Committees.

The Convention then adjourned to 3 o'clock, after prayer by Bro. Smith.

Convention met at 3 o'clock. Prayer by Bro. Sunderland.

Bro. E. Smith, from the West, addressed the Convention at some length, in a most interesting and thrilling manner.

A. Hughes, from Syracuse, N. Y., next spoke.

Bro. C. G. Case, of Fulton, N. Y., made a few remarks. He gave a brief history of the cause in his neighborhood.

Bro. Swift, from Michigan, then addressed the Convention. He said he was a delegate from the Wesleyan Annual Conference that had been formed in the West. He gave a history of their origin; they commenced operations soon after the Methodist Anti-Slavery Convention in New-York, two years ago last fall, having got discouraged in trying to purify the Church of Slavery. In their commencement, and even up to within a few months, they had suffered much from the influence of Bro. O. Scott, and other leading abolitionists in the East, in consequence of their remaining in the Church, but now, he thanked God, their eyes were opened. They commenced with but three ministers, and one hundred members, and now they numbered twenty ministers, and from twelve to fifteen hundred members."

The next morning, after some preliminary business, Bro. Scott, in compliance with a previous vote of the Convention, gave an address.

He sketched the rise and progress of the anti-slavery movement, in a masterly manner; and then glanced at the character and prospects of the present secession. His closing appeal stirred all hearts.

Without entering into any detail of the proceedings at Utica, I shall present the general results arrived at. The following comprises a roll of the delegates present:

"ROLL OF MEMBERS OF THE UTICA CONVENTION."

"*Massachusetts.* *Boston*—O. Scott, Jotham Horton. *J. K. Wellman.* *Andover*—Luther Lee, Daniel Saunders. *Lowell*—Asa Hall, A. W. Moulton, J. Kimball, A. T. Nute, L. Huntress. *Leyden*—J. Tate, B. N. Bullock. *Lynn*—A. Lummus. *Goshen*—W. Willcott. *Hadley*—E. S. Potter. *Rockport*—C. O. Towne. *Hawley*—W. King. *Brewster*—E. D. Bailey. *Charlemont*—E. D. Hawkes. *Duxbury*—A. Josselyn. *Sheffield*—O. Smith. *Springfield*—R. Elmer. ——Elisha Bailey.

New-York. *New-York City*—L. R. Sunderland, Wm. Braine, J. J. Braine, G. F. Needham, D. Harris, J. Timberman. *Utica*—Geo. Pegler, J. Brown, H. Newland, J. Cunningham, H. Bushnell, W. C. Rogers, D. Donaldson, A. Hanna, J. Wrattan, J. Lindley, J. P. Swift, Geo. Batsford, J. Miller, Wesley Bailey, Wm. G. Miller. *Richfield*—N. J. Alpin. *Tyre*—J. Beadle. *Columbia*—W. D. Armstrong. *Clay*—A. Fellows, J. Adams. *Rome*—G. Stedman, N. Shepherd. *Fulton*—C. G. Case. *Syracuse*—H. J. Fitcher, A. Hughes, M. Merrick, Wm. Wescott, C. Merrick, S. F. Green, E. Hunt, John Conrad. *Buffalo*—S. Burton. *Proble*—H. North, Nathl. Goodwin, B. C. Cooper. *Athol*—S. H. Foster. ~~Albion~~—H. Gregory. ~~Canandaigua~~—H. Terry. ~~Geneva~~—W. Clark, E. Clark. *Lockport*—T. Hall. *Winfield*—O. Goff. *Penn Yan*—A. Bridgman, A. Bigelow, R. Bennett. *Camden*—Lyman Stedman, Wm. S. Tuttle. *Royalston*—J. Sibley, A. Warren. *Seneca Falls*—W. Fox. *Durham*—I. Hubbard. *Yates*—I. Swan. *Little Falls*—N. Tryon. *Porter*—S. Salisbury. *Sing Sing*—J. Dungy. *Fowler*—M. Mitchell. *De Kalb*—T. Spafford. *De Witt*—E. J. Ward, A. Harrower. *Mexico*—A. S. Wing. *West Chazy*—H. McKee. *Pierpont*—William W. Stirricker. *Cazenovia*—Philo Ferris. *Manlius*—D. Northup. *Cranger*—J. Watson. *Rossie*—W. Burt, H. Burt. *Poughkeepsie*—J. H. Tucker. *Eaton*—B. F. Morse, Thomas Sims. *Lisbon*—L. King, Edw. Gould. *Freeburn*—L. D. Tatner. *Pomfret*—O. Moore, S. Baird. *Portland*—Wm. Weeks. ——S. Shafford. ——M.

Mitchell. *Newburg*—S. C. Griffing. *Bath*—P. Norris. *Augusta*—S. Kies. *Frankfort*—J. P. Weaver, H. Coolidge. *Thorning*—H. H. Johnson. *Brockett Bridge*—F. Wesley. *Vernon*—L. Eastman. *Litchfield*—J. Raymond. *Solon*—A. Wyer. *Rochester*—D. Richards. *Howled*—J. Kitchell. *Howard*—S. Hall. *Wheeler*—A. De Lap. *Lockport*—H. Norton. *Graton*—E. P. Rowe. *Fulton*—B. F. Bradford. *Middlebury*—A. Hayward. *Le Roy*—R. Randolph R. Pennell. *Lafayette*—C. L. Webb. *Chazy*—M. Fisk.

PENNSYLVANIA. *Pittsburgh*—E. Smith. *Alleghany*—J. Jones. *Philadelphia*—G. W. West, D. Young. *Camptown*—S. G. Palmer, H. McKinney.

OHIO. *Troy*—R. McMurdy. *Cleveland*—N. Bond, J. H. Gorham.

VERMONT. *Pawlet*—C. Prindle. *Poultney*—L. Prindle. *Bridgeport*—E. G. Drake. *Mt. Tabor*—B. Shaw.

CONNECTICUTT. *Killingby*—Geo. May. *Eastford*—A. Latham. *Tolland*—C. W. Moore. *Stratford*—S. Biers.

RHODE ISLAND. *Providence*—L. C. Matlack, P. R. Sawyer, S. R. Jackson.

NEW-HAMPSHIRE. *Newington*—J. W. Wiggin.

MICHIGAN. *Nankin*—Marcus Swift. *Granlane*—Wm M. Sullivan."

The most important business, and that which mostly occupied the time of the Convention was the adoption of a Discipline for the government of the Connection. It was the production of much careful thought, and thorough discussion. But its particular features need not be introduced to notice here.

The points of difference between it and the discipline of the M. E. Church, were numerous, having respect both to the moral sentiments and the ecclesiastical economy of the Churches. They will be better understood by being mentioned in contrast with the provisions of the Episcopal Methodist economy.

The twenty-five Articles of Religion were revised, and some forms of expression were changed without altering any of the doctrines. Several articles were struck out, which only aimed a rebuke at certain tenets of the Remish Church, as it was

thought only desirable to express what should be believed, rather than enter into a detail of errors to be rejected.

The old discipline did not prohibit the traffic in intoxicating drinks, and allowed their use without any restriction, except in the case of spirituous liquors, and these were allowed, if judged necessary, by the individual. The new, prohibited the manufacturing, buying, selling, or using intoxicating liquors, unless for mechanical, chemical, or medicinal purposes; or, in any way, intentionally and knowingly, aiding others so to do.

The old discipline did not prohibit slaveholding, nor the buying and selling of slaves. The new, forbid the buying or selling of men, women or children, with an intention to enslave them; or holding them as slaves; or claiming that it is right so to do.

The old discipline provided for a General Conference once in four years, to consist of ministers only, to be elected by the ministers of each Annual Conference, according to the number of its ministers—having “full powers to make rules and regulations for the Church;” i. e. people and ministers. The new, provided for a General Conference once in four years, to consist of an equal number of ministers and lay members, to be elected by the ministers and laymen of each Yearly Conference, according to the number of members in the Churches—allowing two delegates for every 500 members.

The old discipline made the Bishops, who were elected for life, ex-officio Presidents of the General Conference. The new provided, that a President should be elected at the Conference by ballot. And on the final passage of any question, if one-fourth of the delegates required it, the ministers and laymen should vote separately, and a majority of both classes only constitute a vote; so that the casting vote shall never be in the hands of the presiding officer. The old discipline made the Annual Conferences to consist of ministers exclusively, over whom the Bishop presided, with

power to decide all questions of law, with no appeal to the Conference from his decisions. Having also the absolute control of all the Churches and ministers in the Connection, who must receive such preachers, or go to such places, as he judged best. The new, made the Yearly Conferences to consist of an equal number of ministers and laymen, who elected their own President, and appealed from his decisions at pleasure. They also appointed a stationing Committee of six, ministers and laymen, under the following constitutional directions, as to their duty:

"To station the preachers, confirming, as far as practicable, all arrangements made between preachers and people; provided, that no preacher shall remain on the same station or circuit, in any case, more than three years successively; nor be returned to the same circuit or station, until after an intermission of three years, [if stationed there three successive years;] and provided, also, that no preacher shall be appointed to any station or circuit, contrary to the expressed wishes of the circuit or station.

They shall receive the representations of the preachers and lay delegates; and after fixing on appointments, and reading them out in an early part of the conference, the preachers and lay members shall have the privilege of an appeal to the conference from the report of the stationing Committee."

Without pursuing this contrast any further, it is only necessary to say, that the clerical supremacy, associated with the classification of Christian ministers as bishops, elders and deacons, with unlimited legislative, executive and judicial authority over the whole Church, was at once, and forever, rejected by the Wesleyan economy. And that it recognized, by constitutional provisions, the parity of the ministry; the equal authority of the laity, and the independence of individual Churches, in the selection of their pastors and the administration of their own laws.

CHAPTER III.

NUMERICAL STRENGTH—PASTORAL ADDRESS—POSITION OF THE REFORMED METHODISTS—CLOSE OF THE CONVENTION.

Previous to the Convention for organization, the editor of the True Wesleyan, requested all who desired to unite with the proposed Wesleyan Connection, to send in by the delegates, or by letter, their number and location. Being an assistant Secretary, I had charge of the communications of this character, and found that the whole number of members was 6,000. These were spread over a vast territory, stretching from Maine to Michigan, and from the Northern Lakes to Mason and Dixon's line. A Committee was appointed to arrange the whole work into six Yearly Conferences. Another Committee was appointed to station the preachers. This task was accomplished with much labor, yet to general satisfaction.

The Convention also issued a Pastoral Address, which, for its well matured statements of the character, condition, and prospects of the Connection, as well as its relation to the movement as the first of its class, deserves a place in this narrative.

PASTORAL ADDRESS

Of the Convention assembled at Utica, N. Y., May 31, 1843, for the purpose of organizing the Wesleyan Methodist Church.

To the Members and Friends of the same:

BELOVED BRETHREN AND FRIENDS.—The Convention having accomplished the object for which it assembled, we deem it proper, before we retire to our respective fields of labor, to address you on the subject of its happy issue, and the duties and prospects that lie before us.

But first of all, we would acknowledge the goodness of our Heavenly Father, in favoring us with the Divine presence, and

so large a measure of consolation, fellowship and communion of the Holy Spirit, during the deliberations of the Convention. We can truly say, God has been with us, our spirits have been refreshed, and the deliberations of the Convention have been marked by that brotherly kindness, and unanimity of feeling, which is to be expected, among men assembled from such wide extremes, only when the fellowship of the Spirit is the bond of union, and the glory of God the object at which all aim.

We would congratulate you in view of the new relation in which the action of the Convention places you to each other, and to the Christian world. We are now an organized Christian community, and have an existence and a name among the sister-Churches of our country; and though we are the youngest of them all, and small in comparison with many of them, yet we trust in God that we shall so adhere to the spirit and truth of primitive Christianity, and so subsist upon the 'sincere milk of the word,' that we shall soon be equal in proportions, strength and usefulness, to the oldest, and never be surpassed by those who may hereafter be added to the common family. Most of those who at present compose the New Connection, have been members of the M. E. Church, and have for years been looked upon and treated as refractory children, rebelling against the lawful authority of our Mother's family government, but this charge can no longer be preferred against us. We are now of lawful age, and have entered upon the responsibilities of a distinct community, to be governed upon principles more in accordance with our views of primitive Christianity, and we believe better adapted to the security of individual rights, and to the general development of Christian zeal and enterprise throughout the ministry and membership. We may still respect our Mother for the good she has done in the world, and for the blessings wherewith she has blessed many of us; but we can no longer acknowledge her authority, and with her oppression of the poor, with her corrupting herself with Slavery, and with the arbitrary features of her government, we can have no fellowship.

We can do no less than congratulate you, brethren, on the organization of a Christian community, free from the above-named objectionable features, while it retains all that is valuable in Methodism, all that most of us ever loved, in view of which we joined the M. E. Church, and for the sake of which many of us spent the ardor of our youth and the strength of our

manhood to build her up. Did we leave behind the valuable features of Wesleyan Methodism, we should think we were making a sacrifice indeed, but such is not the case; we retain all that is essential to it, all that is peculiar to the whole family of Wesleyan Methodists in Europe and America, while we have thrown off those peculiarities which distinguish the M. E. Church from the other portions of the Wesleyan family.

The most important changes which we have made, consist in our repudiation of all connection with Slavery and slaveholders, and our rejection of the prerogative system of Episcopacy, and in these it cannot be pretended that we have sacrificed any essential part of Wesleyan Methodism. That our divorce from Slavery and slaveholders cannot be considered a sacrifice of Wesleyanism is plain, since its founder said, that 'Slavery is the sum of all villainies,' and that 'all men-buyers' [slaveholders,] 'are exactly on a level with men-stealers.' Nor can it be contended that Episcopacy is any part of Wesleyan Methodism, for it forms no part of the economy of the Wesleyan Connection in Europe and Canada, but is peculiar to the Methodist E. Church in this country.

We may then congratulate ourselves, on the ground of having retained all that is essential to the identity, life, body and soul of Wesleyan Methodism, while we have separated ourselves from some of its objectionable features, which have been engrafted upon it in this country, and which have, from time-to-time, disturbed and agitated the M. E. Church from its organization to the present day.

The wonderful success of the M. E. Church is regarded, by many, as proof positive, that Episcopacy is right in theory, and union with Slavery not wrong in practice. This, however, is without force, from the fact that Methodism has been equally successful in other countries, where there has been no Episcopacy to direct its energies, and to preside over its councils and its destiny. If the success of the M. E. Church is to be attributed to the efficiency and healthful influence of its Episcopacy, on what principles are we to account for its success, where it has no Episcopacy, and where it goes forth to the conflict upon the principle of true ministerial parity? We answer: the efficiency of Wesleyan Methodism does not depend upon this or that form of Church polity, upon this or that prudential arrangement, but upon divine truth preached in the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from above; it is the purity of her doc-

times, the zeal and sacrificing efforts of her ministers, and the clearness and force with which they have always preached repentance towards God, and justification from sin through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, that has spread around it its peculiar halo of glory, and rendered it so efficient in gathering souls to Christ, crowning every effort with fruit an hundred fold. That Slavery is an evil, and an impediment in the way of the success of the Church, but few will deny; and if success has crowned her efforts, loaded with this intolerable weight of corruption, what may we not look for, from the efforts of a religious community holding the same pure doctrines, carrying out the same grand principles, in the same spirit of zeal and ardor, washed and redeemed from this ever fruitful source of pollution?

Brethren, we are now but small in number, in comparison with many other denominations, but remember that we have just entered upon existence, and have commenced our career with fuller developments of life, and stronger pulsations, than did most or all of our older sisters, when they, like ourselves, first assumed the responsibilities of organised and distinct members of the Christian family. Instead of feeling disheartened in view of our present numbers, we ought to thank God and take courage, on the ground that we are so strong, and that so many have been found to consecrate themselves to the cause of God and humanity. When we consider the circumstances of the case, the powerful influences that have been brought to bear against us, and the force of early imbibed prejudices, and the strength of long-cherished connections, we look upon our present numbers as the surest evidence of the power of our principles, and as a strong assurance of our future success. 'Let the weak say, I am strong.' 'A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation.' Our principles are of God, and will prevail.

We must expect to meet with opposition, endure reproach, and make sacrifices; but these we can cheerfully bear, in the cause of God, justice, mercy and humanity. Let the strength of our principles support us; let the magnitude of the cause in which we are engaged stimulate our exertions; let the true spirit of Christianity give direction to all our efforts; and let the glowing prospect of success, which brightens upon the not very distant future, infuse our soul. What have we, brethren, to fear, so long as we are conscious of doing the will of God? 'If God do for us, who shall then against us?' These, and no

prisons, no chains, no fiery faggots in reservation for us in this land. What if our characters are exalted; if we feel that our names are written in heaven, beyond the reach of poisoned words? What if our motives are impugned, so long as God reads the heart? What if the reputations of some of us should be blighted, so long as we know that the glory remains, yet to be revealed, with which the loss of all on earth cannot compare?

But, brethren, we deem it proper to caution you against indulging in an improper spirit towards those from whom you may receive wrong treatment. Though we would have you fearlessly, at all times, speak the truth in the love of it, yet we trust you will never render evil for evil, or oppose a bitter spirit with the same ill temper of mind. You must expect to be misrepresented, and have your motives impugned; those who remain in the M. E. Church cannot be expected to appreciate your reasons for secession; did they, they would follow your example,—hence they will be led to invent reasons for your course other than the dictates of an enlightened judgment and honest conscience; and this they will do as an excuse for their own course. Not only so, but the history of the past shows that the members of any religious community are wont to feel less friendship for seceders from their own communion, and their general policy is apt to be more bitter and persecuting towards such, than towards other branches of the Church, who are much further removed from their common views. We do not now say why this is so, nor do we say that it is right, but only advert to it as a fact, which sheds some light on the treatment which we shall all, probably, receive from many of our former associates, with whom we have taken sweet counsel in days gone by.

But, brethren, let none of these things move you; you have nothing to fear but yourselves; you will not be betrayed fatally, unless it be by your own hearts. You will not be driven into ruin unless it shall be by your own misconduct. Let us, then, exhort you to be constant in every good work, to be instant in season and out of season, to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, running, with patience, the race that is set before us, enduring all things for Christ's sake. Your enlightened Christian benevolence will so direct you, as to render it unnecessary for me to say much by way of giving specific direction; yet you will suffer as to advice, to a

few leading objects, worthy of the best efforts of every Christian. Your first efforts are, of course, due to the maintenance of the ministrations of truth in your own neighborhoods. It is true, we are not, through a selfish spirit, to overlook the necessity of others, yet those who can be contented without the regular privileges of the sanctuary among themselves, will not be likely to put forth much benevolent effort in behalf of others. Let no effort, then, be wanting, so far as you have the ability, to support the worship of God among yourselves, for your own good, and the good of the community among whom you live.

In connection with the above, we would call your attention to the cause of Sabbath-schools. Too much importance cannot be attached to the religious instruction of the children and youth under our care; it will do more to banish infidelity, to dry up the fountains of vice, to brighten the prospects of the future church, and to lay the foundation for a more glorious era in the history of Christianity, than any other one branch of moral effort.

We also trust you will not be wanting in your efforts to support the cause of Missions, and we are happy to say that measures are already in progress to give you an opportunity to show your zeal in this enterprise, as you will be more particularly informed through another channel. Many have had their benevolence restrained in this branch of moral effort for want of a channel through which to direct their liberality, unpolluted by slavery; and as this obstacle is now removed, we doubt not principal and interest will soon be forthcoming.

The cause of the bleeding slave, you will never forget; nor will you overlook the cause of Temperance, which has already done so much for the restoration of the degraded, and to make the wretched happy. In a word, we desire that every member of the Wesleyan Connection should not only be a zealous advocate of every branch of moral reform, but co-workers, even in the front rank, battling side-by-side with those who contend with the Lord's enemies.

But above all, brethren, we exhort you to make holiness your motto. It is holiness of heart and life that will arm you against every assault, that will give you moral power to oppose the evils and corruption in the world, against which we have lifted up a standard. It is holiness that will insure success in our enterprise that will crown us with a useful life, a triumphant death, and with the fulness, power and glory of eternal

life in the world of redeemed spirits. We will then close with the apostolic prayer, " And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly ; and we pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it ? "

LUTHER LEE, Chairman.

G. PEGLER, J. WATSON, M. SWIFT, R. BENNETT."

Utica, N. Y., June 8, 1843.

With such sentiments actuating the minds of the principle actors in this movement, the result could not be problematical. During every stage of the proceedings, the indications of deep convictions of duty and religious responsibility as the main springs of action, were plainly manifest.

Among those present at the Convention, who took an active part in its deliberations, were several ministers of the Reformed Methodist denomination. Of these the late Rev. Elijah Bailey, the founder of that organization, and others, were enrolled as members of the Convention. Their principles assimilated ~~so~~ nearly to the Wesleyans, that no objection was felt to a speedy union. A Committee was appointed, at the suggestion of Father Bailey, to consider the subject. They reported an arrangement for occupying the pulpits, and employing the ministers of both denominations, by interchange when desirable.

This plan was approved by many of that Church, but the general union has ever taken place. A few ministers and churches have united with the Wesleyans however, and some of their Churches are supplied by Wesleyan preachers.

During a session of less than two weeks, the Wesleyan organization was completed ; embracing within its pale, over one-fifth or eighty pastors, and over six thousand members which were arranged in six Annual Conferences. Many who were opposed to the Convention, anticipated a failure. "The wish was father to that thought." These discussions were at times earnest, but never unkind. The claims of conflicting opinions were freely, fairly, and frankly

fairly. However disappointed some may have been at the fate of a favorite plan, none complained at the general result. The kindest feelings predominated. And the closing scene was interesting and impressive.

CHAPTER IV.

CONTINUED SECESSION—PUBLIC DISCUSSION BETWEEN LUTHER LEE, PROF. KINGSLEY, AND OTHERS—FIRST MISSIONARY MEETING—DISCUSSION RESUMED—FIRST GENERAL CONFERENCE, CLEVELAND, OHIO—ROLL—NUMBER IN THE CONNECTION—REVISALS OF DISCIPLINE—PASTORAL ADDRESS.

Subsequent to the Convention, secessions were going on constantly, adding valuable ministers and promising Churches to the Wesleyan Connection.

A letter, dated June 28, 1843, from Seth Sprague, sen., announced that himself, and fourteen others, in Duxbury, and so many more in N. W. Duxbury, and also in Marshfield, had withdrawn from the M. E. Church, and formed a Wesleyan Church.

On Sabbath day, July 9, a second Wesleyan Church was formed in Lowell, Mass., containing 125 members. About the same time a Wesleyan Church was organized in Dover, New-Hampshire, of fifty members. During this month, a small Church was formed in Troy, N. Y., also.

In August it was announced through the Wesleyan, that the Primitive Methodist Church of Peekskill, N. Y., with Thomas Burrows, the pastor, containing in all 100 members, had united with the Wesleyan Connection.

The ensuing month, Rev. Hiram Cummings, of Duxbury,

Mass., and a large number of the M. E. Church in that place, withdrew and joined "the Wesleyans."

Before the close of the year 1843, many other Churches were formed in the Western States, which I am not able to notice with the detail. Indeed, in that region, the greatest prosperity followed the new movement.

A very interesting discussion, on the subject of Methodist Episcopacy and slaveholding, was held in Western New-York, between Luther Lee, of the Wesleyan, and Prof. Kingsley, and others of the M. E. Church. It commenced on the 2d of January, 1844, and continued four days and nights, in Portland Chataque Co., N. Y. The questions for discussion were—1. Does the Methodist E. Church justify and sanction Slavery as it exists in the United States? 2. Is the polity of the M. E. Church unscriptural and arbitrary? The result of this oral discussion was highly favorable to the new movement in that region.

In the month of March, 1844, the first missionary meeting in the Wesleyan Connection, was held in the first Wesleyan Chapel built in New-England, at Providence, R. I. Messrs. Horton, Scott and Matlack, addressed the meeting. From the proceedings published by Samuel R. Jackson, Secretary, it appears that over \$200 was raised and appropriated to Home Missions.

The discussion in Western New-York, before noticed, was renewed April 9, at Jamestown, on the challenge of Professor Kingsley, of Alleghany College. It occupied four days and a half, and was participated in by Luther Lee and Edward Smith, on the one hand, and Messrs. Kingsley, Graham and Steadman on the other. The result was, that Wesleyanism was more firmly established in that region, and its foes seemed to lose their keen relish for discussion.

Without further detail, I come now to the period of "The first General Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Churches in the United States."

This body of Christians and Christian ministers met in Cleve-

land, Ohio, Wednesday, Oct. 3, at 10 o'clock, A. M. As many were not present, a temporary organization only was entered into. The meeting was called to order by Edward Smith; and Luther Lee was appointed President, pro tem. Lewis Woodson was appointed Secretary, pro tem. The roll of the members was made out in part, and it was announced that L. Lee would preach in the evening. The meeting then adjourned.

In the afternoon the Conference was organized fully. O. Scott was elected President. He however declined serving. After various expressions of unwillingness, the Conference accepted his resignation. On a second or third balloting Luther Lee was elected President.

At the first ballott, L. C. Matlack had the most votes for Secretary, but there was no choice. He declined being a candidate for the office, and a second ballotting resulted in the election of Robert McMurdy.

The President then called on Bro. Boucher to read the Scriptures. After singing, Bro. Boucher and Cyrus Prindle united in prayer. A hearty response was given to the supplications put forth, especially in repeating the Lord's Prayer. A holy glow of religious feeling prevailed the Conference, which promised to guide the deliberations of the body to a happy issue. When the Conference resumed its business, it was voted that Lucius C. Matlack be appointed Conference reporter. Committees were appointed on Revisals, Boundaries, Pastoral Address, Slavery, Temperance, Education, Missions, Peace, and on the Annual Conference Journals. After announcing the meetings of various committees, the Conference adjourned to meet at 8 o'clock, A. M.

The roll of members, when completed, embraced the following delegates from the Conferences named. Some of these were absent:

NEW-ENGLAND CONFERENCE. *Ministers*—O. Scott, J. Horton, Geo. May, L. C. Matlack, Wm. H. Brewster. *Laymen*—

S. Sprague, Jr., Wm. Blakemore, R. Elmer, J. Kimball, S. R. Jackson.

NEW-YORK CONFERENCE. *Ministers*—L. Lee, P. M. Way, S. Salsbury, W. Bailey, P. R. Sawyer, J. Watson, R. Bennett. *Laymen*—C. G. Case, E. Bishop, of Jamestown, N. Y., Isaac Gray, H. J. Fritcher, A. Hanna, H. Mastin, W. H. Pillow.

[Geo. Pegler, a reserve, attended in place of one of these brethren.]

CHAMPLAIN CONFERENCE. *Ministers*—C. Prindle, M. Bates, L. King. *Laymen*—M. Stow, J. Blaisdell, M. Mitchell, J. Byington.

[H. McKee, a reserve, attended for M. Bates.]

ALLEGHANY CONFERENCE. *Ministers*—E. Smith, J. W. Walker, L. Woodson, R. B. Gardner, C. Woodruff. *Laymen*—J. H. Vincent, J. Young, Thos. Freeman, of Virginia, Thos. McKeever, A. R. Dempster.

MIAMI CONFERENCE. *Ministers*—P. A. Ogden, J. Boucher, R. Brandriff, M. Harker, S. H. Chase. *Laymen*—R. McMurdy, John Grant, E. T. Harker.

MICHIGAN CONFERENCE. *Ministers*—Marcus Swift, Wm. M. Sullivan, Wm. P. Essler. *Laymen*—Valorus Meeker, M. D., Geo. J. Barker, G. W. Swift.

[S. Bebbins, a reserve, attended in place of Marcus Swift.]

Passing by the report of Committees and other proceedings, which may in after years be worthy of special record, I shall only glance at some miscellaneous items of interest.

At the election for Agent and Editor, at the first ballot, for Book Agent, thirty-four votes were cast—and Orange Scott had thirty-two, and was declared elected.

At the first ballot for Editor, thirty-seven votes were cast, of which Luther Lee had twenty-six, and was chosen.

NUMBERS IN THE CONNECTION.

The following reports were made to the General Conference, by those whose names are prefixed:

"Alleghany Conference."—E. Smith. This Conference has doubled its membership, and stationed this year 45 preachers. The membership numbers 2500.

Miami Conference.—P. A. Ogden. In 1843 this Conference numbered 500 in the membership. This year it reports 2400: having more than quadrupled in one year. It stationed 42 preachers.

Michigan Conference.—Wm. M. Sullivan. This Conference was organized in 1841, previous to the Eastern secession, and united with the Wesleyans at Utica. It stations 22 preachers. The membership is 1300.

New England Conference.—J. Horton. There are 36 preachers stationed, and 2400 members on the various circuits and stations.

Champlain Conference.—C. Prindle. In 1843 they had 1000, now 2500 members. Within a few months, more than 300 were added by conversion.

New York Conference.—L. Lee. At the first session of this Conference, four months since, the membership was 3500. They have 60 stationed preachers."

Including preachers, stationed and unstationed, their numbers being equal, the Connection is in all 15,000 members.

In addition to these "items," the revisals of the Discipline demand a passing notice.

The Judiciary rules were amended; by specifying the privileges allowed defendants in cases of Church trials; and by refusing to let the pastor preside in a trial where he prefers the charges.

The delegates to the Yearly Conferences, were to be elected by the Church, and not by the Quarterly Conference.

Each Yearly Conference is to appoint a committee of five, to provide a president in case of vacancy.

The Yearly Conference is to send one ministerial, and one lay delegate, for every one thousand members within its bounds.

A new section was added, specifying the duties of all officers in the Wesleyan Connection.

The expulsion of members for non-attendance on class-meetings, was repudiated as unauthorized by God's word. Kind admonition for the neglect, was substituted.

The ceremonial services were much abridged. The semi-papal consecration of the elements of the Lord's Supper, was abolished entirely.

The last item I shall notice, was the action on "Secret, oath-bound Societies." At the Utica Convention this matter was referred to the Yearly Conferences. But the General Conference adopted the following question and answer. "Have we any directions to give concerning Secret, oath-bound Societies?"

"Ans.—We will on no account tolerate our ministers and members in joining Secret, oath-bound Societies, or holding fellowship with them, as in the judgment of the Wesleyan Methodist Connection it is inconsistent with our duties to God and Christianity to hold such connections."

A copy of the Pastoral Address, prepared by the Chairman, C Prindle, will conclude this narrative of the General Conference.

PASTORAL ADDRESS,

To the Members of the Wesleyan Methodist Connection in America :

"DEAR BRETHREN,—The General Conference of the Wesleyan Connection in America, assembled at Cleveland, Ohio, Oct. 2, 1844, send to their brethren 'scattered abroad,' their salutations of peace and grace, in the name of our common Lord and Redeemer. And, as for ourselves, so, for all those whom we represent on this occasion, we invoke from heaven grace, mercy and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, whose we are, and whom we serve, in the gospel of salvation.

This to us is a time of deep interest and mutual sympathy: and it is only giving utterance to the feeling that has made us one in spirit, when we say, that 'we long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.' You are dear to us, as our epistles, read and known of all men, and partakers with us of conflicts and joys, the attendants of living 'godly in Christ Jesus.' And we call upon you, dear brethren, to unite with us in blessing 'the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto

a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.'

In saying that we are exceedingly filled with comfort in hearing of your steadfastness in the faith, and the influence our Connection is exerting, but poorly conveys to you the joy that makes us glad in the Lord. To the praise of God we can say, we never saw a day of more hope and promise than is the present. We met from the land of the Pilgrims, and of the lakes and prairies, and found ourselves one in spirit; and to the praise of God, we have acted in this spirit, and now part as we met, to resume our toils and labors, in spreading scriptural holiness through the land, and to gather new trophies to the honor of our exalted High Priest.

From the time we have been organized, and the opportunities afforded us, we are confident in the belief that our position is one peculiarly suited to awaken and inspire public confidence. And we have been assured, from the most reliable sources, that the directing of our efforts against the mammoth institution of oppression, has already awakened the hope of the slave in his imurement, as well as kindled anew the zeal of the noble army of Christian patriots, who have pledged themselves to the emancipation of their brethren in bonds. The same, substantially, is true in relation to ecclesiastical domination, the subversion of which was one of the primary purposes of the Wesleyan Methodist Connection.

As an illustration of the truthfulness of these views, we have the satisfaction of announcing to our brethren, that in this, our first General Conference, we have a representative from the "Old Dominion" herself. Yes to the praise of God, and the honor of that truth which brings mercy in equal measure to bond and free, and demonstrative refutation of the oft repeated protestation of our oppressors, that we had wholly and forever cut ourselves off from the exercise of our mission south of Mason and Dixon's line, at this, our first meeting in General Conference, lo, and behold, we meet a delegate from beyond the imaginary wall of brass, warm in the love of freedom, civil and religious. This fact is to us one of interest, and we doubt not it will be to you.

And if such be the beginning, what, may we not ask, will be

the end of the mission in which we are employed, but the entire overthrow of slavery in the American States? In this hope our hearts beat high and strong; nor shall our faith stagger, if we but stand fast in the Lord. And, substantially, the same cheering accounts are brought to us from all parts of our wide spread Connection. Already we have extended our fields of labor East and West, far, far beyond the expectations of the most confident of those who, in the name of the Lord, lifted up the Wesleyan banner in the commencement of this enterprise.

From statistical returns from the several Yearly Conferences, we now have some 15,000 in our membership. And so confident is this General Conference of a rapid progression in the future, that they have changed the ratio of representation to the next General Conference from 500 to 1000; and even with this increase, it is confidently anticipated that our next meeting will be much larger than the present one. Such are the views now entertained; and with strong confidence in God, we consecrate ourselves to the work of our calling for their realization.

Of our proceedings in our several sittings, you will be duly advised; and we hope that our labors will prove generally acceptable to the Connection in all its parts. To do what God and truth require of us has been our first object, and to please our brethren for their good to edification, the subordinate one. To God and the word of His grace we commend ourselves and our works, praying our brethren abroad to accord to us, their representatives, rectitude of purpose and hearty good will to all men.

Having thus, beloved brethren, brought before you the commanding position you occupy in the Christian community, the extent of success which has already crowned our efforts, as well as the capability of our Connection for good, we cannot omit solemnly to urge upon your attention the importance of acting worthily your part in the great reformatory process we are laboring to bring to a consummation.

Ye are the light of the world, the witnesses of truth, the friends of the crushed and oppressed, who are looking with imploring solicitude, that you should be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. And we have confidence in you, that ye both do, and will do the things which are commanded you.

That obstacles will be thrown in the way of our efforts, both from prejudice and misapprehension, we will not disguise. But, as in many places these obstacles are giving way before the force of truth, so it is confidently believed will it be generally, so soon as our principles and designs shall be comprehended. Truth has a moral force in it that is equal to every holy design; and if the hidden things of dishonesty and craftiness are renounced, and we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God, we cannot fail to throw an attraction over all honest hearts, that will bring a host into the "one fold," under the 'one Shepherd.' To effect this, we cannot too strongly urge upon our entire membership the importance of maintaining all the habits of a holy walk before God and the world. To be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, should be the controlling object of every Wesleyan Methodist in the land, that it may be seen that we have not run in vain.

To fulfil the duties of our mission as a branch of the Church of God, in this most eventful period of the world's history, individual, as well as associated responsibilities must be realized. Every individual of the 15,000 in the Wesleyan Methodist Connection is occupying a sentinel post, and should sound the alarm at the approach of danger. The honor of God, the glory of a pure Christianity, the crushed slave, as well as our own personal salvation, all urge us to the performance of the duties of our high calling.

And now, dear brethren, we, your pastors and representatives, standing before the presence of our Lord and Judge, from the fulness of affectionate regard to you, and hope for the future, exhort you to be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. And unto Him who is able to save you, and keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy: to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever, Amen.

We are, dear brethren, your servants in the common faith.

C. PRINDLE,
E. SMITH,
J. BOUCHER."

Cleveland, O., Oct. 11, 1844.

CHAPTER V.

CLOSING SUMMARY—EDUCATION—CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP—MISSIONS—PARENT MISS. SOCIETY ORGANIZED—LETTER FROM N. CAROLINA—STATISTICS OF THE CONNECTION—GENERAL CONFERENCE OF 1848—CONCLUSION.

The first General Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Connection having met, transacted the business peculiar to a new organization, and passed the ordeal of earnest, thorough discussion; that body, quietly adjourned, to test the wisdom of its ecclesiastical economy and the truth of its moral positions, by actual experiment. The reception and success which followed, will be developed in a condensed narrative of the leading facts of the four years immediately succeeding. This will be associated with a glance in retrospect, at some facts prior to the period now named.

In the earliest period of the history of the Connection, it was appropriate to notice the movements of individual Churches and ministers. As the perspective enlarged by the progression of years, it ceased at once to be interesting or important, from the accumulation of other matters of interest. It is proper to say, however, that subsequently, the denomination was enlarged by the formation of Churches, and the accessions of ministers, whose character and talent, place them not a whit behind the chiefest. As a summary is all that is now proposed, it will be arranged under a few general departments or topics.

Of Education. Immediate attention was directed to this subject. At the Convention of organization, in 1843, a Committee on education was appointed, whose report was adopted unanimously. This report recommended the organization of an Institute to embrace within itself the several departments of Literature, Science and Theology. The first General Conference repeated the recommendation, and pointed to the Oberlin Insti-

tute as a model. No such institution has yet been founded. In New-England, a seminary of the higher class, was commenced in 1844, under the patronage and control of the New-England Conference. It was, however, suspended after continuing two years. Preliminary arrangements were made by the Alleghany Conference for erecting a college. The enterprise has not advanced, however, nor is it in prospect of early completion. The Michigan Conference made a more successful effort than either before mentioned. I introduce here extracts from the recent report of the Trustees. The Chairman says of their Conference Institute :

"The following is a brief view of the present stage of our affairs. We have a very eligible site of ten acres, on the village plat, a gift from the citizens of Leoni, and pronounced by those who have a taste in the location of such Institutions, as one that cannot be surpassed in the interior of our State. Last summer we put up a kiln of brick, on the spot where we take them from the bed, burned, and are to use them there, for the building. We have also collected most of the other materials, and a good portion of the mechanical labor subscribed.

* * * * *

We have employed the Rev. William Holmes, of New-Haven, Conn., and a member of the New-England Conference, as Principal, who has become identified with the interests of the Institution. There is now a flourishing school under our direction, in Leoni, though the funds placed in our hands are no way liable, as it has been a settled policy with us, to make the tuition pay the teacher or teachers.

* * * * *

W. D. MOORE,
Chairman of Board of Trustees."

Leoni, Feb. 3, 1848.

At Troy, Ohio, a flourishing school has been established by individual enterprise, which is patronized by the Miami Conference, and promises to be, hereafter, a permanent institution of learning.

It is unnecessary to expiate at length, on the causes of em-

barrassment to a young and feeble Connection, in its early efforts to promote education.

Humble as has been the efforts of the Connection, they evince a disposition that will develope itself with an increase of ability, hereafter, in a manner worthy of the followers of Wesley, the "Fellow of Oxford University."

Christian Fellowship. A determination not to fellowship slaveholders was the occasion of secession. This non-fellowship position, with the temperance test adopted, narrowed the circle of Christian intercourse to a very limited space. For unfortunately, most of the Churches were involved in the responsibility of sustaining slavery or intemperance. Especially was this true of the Methodist denominations of this country. It was not long, however, before a mutual interchange of fraternal sympathy, began to be manifested between ministers of the new organization in this country, and others of similar principles in England and Canada.

The first a communication, dated at Barn Park House, Barncastle, Cornwall, Jan. 27, 1845, from Thomas P. Rosevear, as member of the "Connectional Committee" of the "Wesleyan Methodist Association" of Great Britain, which was organized in 1835-6. This was responded to, by forwarding as requested, "more ample particulars and information respecting" the advancement and prospects of the Connection here.

The next exhibition of this feeling, was an official address from "The Canadian Methodist New Connection." This address was prepared by Rev. E. Morris, [since stationed in Boston—now a minister of the Wesleyan Connection,] by instructions from the Annual Conference, and signed by "J. Wilkinson, President." After appropriate congratulatory remarks, the address proceeds to give a brief account of the body whom it represents. It is stated in substance, that the "New Connection" originated in 1829, and was distinguished as an anti-episcopal, anti-slavery, and temperance organization. It expressed an earnest desire for fraternal union, and an official cor-

respondence. As, however, no one was authorized to speak for the Wesleyan Connection as a body, in the interval of the General Conference, which meets quadrennially, that address remained unanswered until after the session of October, 1848.

Subsequent to this, some intercourse was had between individuals in this country and others in England, which may pave the way for a closer Christian union between the several bodies of seceding Methodists in both hemispheres.

An interesting correspondence was kept up for several months publicly, between ministers of the "United Brethren," (a denomination agreeing with the Wesleyans in Theology,) and the Wesleyans, proposing a union of the two. A Convention was almost agreed upon. But for various reasons, the matter was indefinitely postponed.

The latest expression of desire for fraternal intercourse, is developed by a circular which stated the rise, progress and principles of the American Wesleyans. It was conveyed to England by Rev. Dennis Harris, of New York city, and by him circulated extensively, in Great Britain and Ireland.

This document was signed by the following persons : Luther Lee, Editor ; Cyrus Prindle, Book Agent ; D. Harris, Elder ; A. Moran, Elder ; W. D. Parker, Trustee ; Wm. Gibson, Trustee ; S. Hurd, Trustee ; Jarvis Johnson, Trustee ; John Mitchell, Trustee ; W. H. Pillow, Trustee ; Dan' Sands, Trustee ; Thos. Jackson, Trustee ; Horace B. Knight, Printer to the Connection.

This document was laid before the Thirteenth Annual Assembly of the Wesleyan Methodist Association, England—which met in August, 1848. They instructed their Secretary to open a correspondence with the Wesleyans of this country. To this, and other documents of a similar character, which had been presented, a reply was ordered by the last General Conference held in New-York city, Oct., 1848.

The growing spirit of Christian union, if it does not connect all denominations, will yet assimilate those of kindred views

and principles, the world over. And the subsequent history of Wesleyan Methodism will exhibit a bond of love uniting its detachments in one solid phalanx, with face turned to the common foe.

Of Missions. True to its primary character in every land, Wesleyanism, as now organized in this country, showed at once its missionary interest. While, as yet, the churches were in need of aid, they began to contribute missionary money, confident of the truth, "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth."

The first missionary meeting held in the Connection, was held in the Fountain street church, Providence, R. I., when the writer was pastor—1844. More than \$200 was raised in cash. The meeting was addressed by Rev. J. Horton, L. C. Matlack, and the late Rev. O. Scott.

The Yearly Conferences generally formed missionary societies. Some of the churches did the same, of which last class, the Boston society has been the most efficient. Of the Annual Conferences, it is now admitted that the Alleghany leads off, as the most liberal and enterprising. At the anniversary meeting for 1845, no less than \$558 was pledged by the brethren for the ensuing year. This effort they said was only the beginning, as they intended to carry the matter into all the circuits and stations. Other Conferences did well, and not a few important Churches grew up under the fostering care of Conference missionary societies.

The attention of the Wesleyans was early directed to the wants of the fugitives in Canada, who had escaped from Slavery in this land of boasted freedom. The New England Yearly Conference of 1845, first sent a missionary there, J. N. Mars. Subsequently this mission was transferred to the Parent Missionary Society, whose Board is located at New York city. The history of this society demands a passing notice.

At the New York Conference of 1845, it was voted:

"That the New York Yearly Conference recommend the

formation of a Parent Wesleyan Missionary Society in the city of New York, on or before the first of August next, and also, to appoint a committee of fifteen to prepare a constitution and make arrangements for organizing said society. The following brethren were appointed : O. Scott, L. Lee, S. Hoes, J. Mayell, A. Moran, C. Prindle, L. C. Matlack, H. Coolidge, S Keys, T. Jackson, D. Harris, B. F. Morse, D. H. Sands, J. Blaisdell and William H. Pillow."

After consultation, a public meeting was called by this committee, to be held August 4, 1845, in New York city. The day previous, being the Sabbath, three sermons were preached on the subject, in King street chapel. Rev. S. Hoes, in the morning, discoursed of "Glorying in the Cross,"—Rev. W. H. Brewster, 3 P. M., dwelt on "The obligations of Christians," and Rev. C. C. Mason, in the evening, preached from Isaiah, xxviii.: 5, 6, "In that day shall the Lord of Hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people; and for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate." The exercises of the Sabbath were spoken of with great satisfaction, by all who were present.

On Monday evening the public meeting was held, and addressed by Rev. Messrs. Brewster, Hoes and Mason. It was an occasion of unusual interest, and resulted in the organization of "The Missionary Society of the Wesleyan Methodist Connection of America," of which Cyrus Prindle was chosen President, Orange Scott, Treasurer, Luther Lee, Corresponding Seeretary, and W. H. Pillow, Recording Secretary, and a board of twenty-five Managers. Four hundred dollars was raised in cash and pledges at this meeting.

The first anniversary of this society was celebrated on Sabbath, Nov. 8, 1846, and Monday evening following. The sermons on Sabbath were preached by Rev. Messrs. M. Bates, J. Hardy and C. Prindle. Addresses were also delivered by the same, on Monday evening.

The Treasurer reported the receipt of \$1,632 16, and the expenditure a few dollars less. This did not embrace the sums raised and expended in the several Yearly Conferences. The report of the Managers, prepared by Luther Lee, presented a most interesting view of the missions occupying their attention.

In the months of September and October, the President, C. Prindle, had taken a tour through Canada, and viewed the whole ground, of which he published an elaborate report in the *True Wesleyan* of Dec. 5, 1846. At this time there were in the field, Brs. Mars, Kirkland, Brooks and Denslow, and Phebe Jarvis, from Ohio.

A complete narrative of the Society is not essential. A notice of its organization and first anniversary, is perhaps, sufficient. To this may be added, that in the Autumn of 1847 Rev. Edward Smith, of the Alleghany Conference, was appointed by the Board to visit Canada West. His report was published in the *True Wesleyan* of Jan. 1, 1848. He found that those who had become associated as Wesleyans, numbered about two hundred members. They were distinct from the Wesleyans in the United States, in order to secure certain corporate advantages. They had five circuits. The appointments were :

Isaac Henson, *President*; Jacob Dorsey, *Evangelist*; *Wellington*—Peter Curtis, Jacob *Libertas*; *Norwich*—to be supplied; *London*—Benj. Smith; *Dawn and Chatham*—Isaac J Henson; *Colchester*—Wm. Ruth.

In view of the state of things then existing, it was judged best by the Board to give up the immediate oversight of the work to those named above. They therefore appointed no resident superintendent. But the Rev. E. Smith, was appointed general superintendent, to visit them twice or three times in the year, and afford them such aid and counsel as he was well adapted to bestow. And to this end he has since devoted himself most assiduously, soliciting money and means, which he has distributed, by the instructions of the Board, so as to accomplish the most good. His recent movements are to

generally and favorably known to the Connection, that it is only necessary to refer to them, as published in the *True Wesleyan*.

There yet remains one item on Missions, of most thrilling interest. It is the formation of a Wesleyan Church in a distant slaveholding state. Its history claims a prominent place in this volume.

The first Annual Report of the Missionary Society, (see *True Wesleyan*, Nov. 14, 1846,) contained the following letter from Jamestown, North Carolina, dated October 25, 1845, and addressed to Rev. L. Lec.

"DEAR SIR:—I learn from other sources that you publish a paper in New York city, called the '*True Wesleyan*,' the organ of an order of Wesleyan Methodists, that holds no fellowship with slaveholders. I have, however, not been able to learn the terms of publication; but if you will forward the paper to me, as soon as I can ascertain the price, I will remit it to you.

I also wish you, if you possibly can, to forward to me a copy of your Church Discipline, by mail, with as little delay as possible, stating the price on the book or otherwise, and I will remit that also.

One reason, with others, why I wish to procure a copy of your Discipline is, there are many Methodists with whom I am partially acquainted, who, together with myself, feel so conscientiously scrupulous on the subject of slavery, that we cannot hold fellowship with the M. E. Church, South. Neither are we willing longer to acquiesce in that power which granted a separate organization, and a transfer of our rights in membership and property therewith, without our consent, or without our having any voice in the matter. Hence, some 40 or 50 individuals—members of the Church, met in convention, and resolved to withdraw from the Church, South, and either unite with some other branch or order of the Church, or organize ourselves into a separate body, on such principles, and under such government as we may think accords best with our views of Church polity; and best calculated to promote the cause of true and vital religion. We wish therefore to obtain a copy of your Discipline, and should it be such to which we can conscientiously subscribe, we wish to connect ourselves with you."

The brethren of whom this letter speaks, subsequently organized a Wesleyan Church, and made application for admission into the Alleghany Conference, and was recognized on the Minutes for 1847, as Guilford circuit, to which A. Crooks was appointed a missionary. The occasion of his offer to go to that far off land, the prompt and liberal contributions at once to meet his expenses and furnish the means for his support, were described to the writer, with the attendant circumstances, by an eye witness. It was a most thrilling occasion.

Bro. Crooks ascertained that the anti-slavery feeling of Guilford circuit, which originated the Wesleyan Church, had its origin in the circulation of Edward Smith's address on Slavery in 1843, by Dr. Stanton, a Quaker. Two thousand copies of it had been printed and circulated by the Friends. Such was the effect of it that a large number refused to be identified with the M. E. Church, South, when the great division occurred.

Subsequently, under date of April 6, 1848, he says, "Our second Quarterly-meeting, which commenced the third Saturday in March, was held in a new house * * * The meeting was protracted ten days. During the meeting, twelve touched the sceptre of mercy by faith and were at peace. The same number joined the Church. There have been thirty-two accessions this year. All glory to Him whose wing of love overshadowed us.

The account of missionary operations has been given thus in detail, to exhibit fully the interesting fact, that the Wesleyan organization is fulfilling the two-fold mission of carrying the Gospel to the fugitive slaves in Canada, and also of proclaiming liberty at the South.

In order to a faithful exhibit of the growth and strength of the denomination, it is proper now to introduce a table of the numbers at the Yearly Conferences for 1848. These, compared with the reports of 1843 and 1844, will exhibit the facts.

In two or three instances, the records have been incomplete. But the correctness of the general result is not effected thereby.

<i>Conferences.</i>	<i>Ministers.</i>	<i>Licentiates.</i>	<i>Members.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
New-York	26	20	945	991
New-England.....	40	10	1991	2041
Champlain	25	13	1300	1338
St. Lawrence.....	35	36	1150	1221
Rochester	83	42	2716	2841
Alleghany.....	40	25	3278	3343
Miami.....	55	34	2110	2199
Michigan.....	50	17	1566	1633
Illinois	8	15	568	591
Wisconsin.....	8	10	250	268
<hr/>				
	Min. 370	Licen. 222	Mem. 15874	Tot. 16466

As the narrative approaches the present period, there is less occasion for detail. The events of to-day need no elaboration. It is only in the growing dimness of the distant past, that particularity and detail become essential in the record of facts. Now, all are familiar with the incidents, which may in after years occupy a large space on the records of history. For the present, a brief summary is all sufficient.

Among the events yet unnoticed in this narrative, is the death of the late Rev. O. Scott. This occurred in July, 1847. The life of such a man is a public benefit. His death is a common loss. A record of the fact, in this history, is a tribute due to his memory, as well as an appropriate expression of regret at the irreparable loss sustained by the Christian community. The language of the General Conference of the Wesleyan Connection, at its session in 1848 is, as proper a tribute as the writer can offer to the memory of one whom he loved as a brother. It is here transcribed from the records of that body.

RESOLUTIONS ON THE DEATH OF THE REV. O. SCOTT.

1. Resolved, by the General Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Connection of America, That, while the decease of the late Rev. O. Scott, is truly a serious loss to the Connection, and a most afflictive bereavement to his family, it was also an exhibition of the dignity of the Christian character, and should awaken in us all, an emulation to live so that in dying we may say, with our lamented brother, "All is peace!"

2. Resolved, That we hereby express our earnest sympathy with the widow of the late Rev. O. Scott, in the afflictive bereavement, which has deprived her of a worthy companion, an affectionate husband, the father of her children. And while we know that words are feeble to express the feelings of our hearts, and do not purpose attempting to check the sorrow that has accumulated by the dying form of an infant child, a husband, and a daughter, it is yet a source of pleasure to sorrowing friends to know, that the life and character of Orange Scott, has left an imperishable monument to his fame, as a good man, a successful minister, and a moral leader.

3. Resolved, That the Secretary be instructed to forward a copy of these resolutions to the widow of the late Rev. Orange Scott.

Signed

L. C. MATLACK,
DANIEL WORTH,
SETH SPRAGUE,
Committee.

The vacancy created by the sickness and subsequent death of Orange Scott, in the important post of Book Agent, was most satisfactorily filled by the appointment of the Rev. Cyrus Prindle. The confidence reposed in him was of great service to the Book Concern; the affairs of which had become much embarrassed by the long protracted illness of the former Agent.

We now approach a period that concludes the narrative—the session of the second General Conference of the Wesleyan Connection. This body met in King-st. Chapel, New-York city, Oct. 4, 1848. A temporary organization was effected in the morning. Hiram McKee, of Wisconsin, was chosen to preside,

and Lucius C. Matlack, appointed Secretary. Prayer was offered by Rufus Lumry and Palmer M. Way.

The next day, a permanent organization was effected. Daniel Worth, of the Miami Conference, was chosen President. L. C. Matlack, of the New-England Conference, was appointed Secretary.

The most important business of the session was the revision of the Discipline. This was accomplished mainly by a Committee, to whose chairman, L. Lee, was allotted most of the labor performed. The Discipline was completely revised, in respect to the mode of proceeding in Church trials, and the details of the general economy. The only material change adopted is found in the following provisions :

" 1. All ministers and Churches shall be at liberty to contract the pastoral relation, at any time during the intervals of the Yearly Conferences, provided, that no arrangement which received the sanction of a Conference at its previous session, shall be interrupted without the consent of the President.

2. All ministers and licentiates, who are laboring under the direction of the Conference, shall be at liberty to enter into engagements to serve any Church or Churches, for one year from the next session of the Conference, and it shall be the duty of all ministers, licentiates, and Churches, having entered into such engagements to report the same to the Conference, at its session.

3. The Conference shall not interfere with such engagements, except for justifiable cause, growing out of the fault of one or both of the parties."

The necessary business of the Conference was transacted through the usual committees. These items are not of interest to the general reader, and are therefore omitted.

The Agent, Cyrus Prindle, presented a report of the state of the Book Concern, which showed the assets to be, total, \$21,700 33—liabilities, in all \$14,898 73—leaving a balance in favor of the Concern of \$6,801 60. This the Agent estimated to be worth at least, \$5,000 in cash,

Subsequent to this, the General Conference passed a resolution of thanks to the Agent for the faithfulness, diligence and success of his labor. He declined serving the Church in that capacity any longer, and much to the regret of all, persisted in that purpose, for reasons which were satisfactory to himself, and doubtless proper.

When the election for Agent of the Book Concern and Editor was held, it resulted in the choice of Edward Smith, Agent, and Luther Lee, Editor. After that, in view of representations made by the delegates of the Alleghany Conference, of the certainty of E. Smith's declinature, and ultimate necessity of choosing some other person, it was voted to go again into the election for Agent. The second balloting resulted in the choice of L. C. Matlack.

After having concluded the duties of the session, the General Conference adjourned, to test by the experience of four years longer, the economy, thus far satisfactory, and productive only of good. A single inquiry yet remains to be suggested and answered briefly, which will constitute a concluding topic.

In conclusion, I present the inquiry—Who were the Wesleyan ministers? Were they a class of men whose ambition outstripped their attainments, and left them disappointed and disaffected toward the M. E. Church? Far from it. Many of their number were for years traveling ministers in that Church, and occupied some of the best stations, as their minutes will show. So good, that none of them ever dreamed of obtaining better by secession.

The association of these men for christian purposes, was by their foes declared to be a combination for wicked ends alone, and made the subject of ridicule and slander. The bitterness of that controversy is past, I trust forever. It will not be recalled here by any quotations. The documents will be reserved for future reference if necessary.

One feature in this movement deserves special notice. It was disconnected with any great agitation, and occurred at a time

of profound peace. Those who seceded did so deliberately. It was the result of calm reflection. Hence few turned back, and a greater prosperity was realized than any expected. A letter to Cyrus Prindle, by Orange Scott, a short time before his secession, expressed the opinion, that in one year's time there might be a denomination raised of perhaps two thousand members. Such was the ambition and hope of the leader, under God. But in six months there were 6,000, and a year afterwards, 15,000 in the Connection, which, after the sober second thought of four years, had yet increased to nearly 17,000 souls.

If the formation of a sect was the end in view, the mission of the seceders is being successfully prosecuted. But a higher aim than this has ever been before them, if the writer may be allowed to testify. It was, to do right. And also to exert an influence upon the religious community of the land, especially in favor of the oppressed. The influence of the united testimony of seventeen thousand christians, organized for anti-slavery purposes, could but be powerful. The actual results may be seen by consulting the appendix to this narrative.

A few words in conclusion. The position of other denominations on the subject of Slavery, was similar to that of the M. E. Church, as presented in the foregoing narrative. So general an endorsement of the christianity of Slavery, for such it was in fact, gave to the enemies of religion occasion of great triumph. Skepticism never increased so rapidly, among all classes of society, as within the few years past. The glaring inconsistency between the precepts of christianity and the practices sanctioned by most of the Churches, allowing or apologizing for Slavery, explains this result.

A deep conviction of this fact, had a powerful influence on the minds of those who associated together as Wesleyan Methodists. And their organization on high moral ground, involving, as it did, great personal sacrifices in the loss of friends, reputation and support, did much to arrest the sweeping denunciations against all Churches that began to prevail. And although

the love of sect, led many in the old organizations to complain against, and denounce the Wesleyans bitterly at first, it is to be hoped, that the service they may be able to render the cause of Christianity by their advanced position and consistent course, will secure for them a better character. The future will record their vindication, better than the ablest narrative of the past.

Already have ministers, of various denominations, followed the example of the Wesleyan Connection, and come out from pro-slavery Church relations. Some have succeeded in gathering Churches around them, that withhold all fellowship from slaveholders. Many more ministers and Churches are laboring to bring their different religious associations to the non-fellowship position. Such a position is made more necessary, and is also more easy to attain, now that the example of a large religious body of seceders, and growing public sentiment, recommends it. To this result the American Churches will all be brought by secession and revolution. No earthly power can resist the Divine energy that gives impulse to the onward movements of Truth. The times are ominous. The present is an age of thought, investigation. The Churches are now being analyzed by the searchings of radical truth. The brightness of mid-day is gathering round the sacred, and sometimes gloomy, enclosure of the sanctuary. The veil that has long obscured the sight, will soon be rent with violence, and the human eye, rest with delight upon the pure transparency of truth and love, or recoil from the repulsive spectacle of rottenness, and dead men's bones. Most glorious will be the day, that witnesses the resurrection and ascension of the Church to its glorious destination, as the day-spring from on high, the beacon light of the world, throwing the full blaze of its effulgence along the pathway of error, and pointing out the sure remedy for every human ill. Such is the sphere of its operations, as indicated by the explicit language of inspiration.

APPENDIX.

General Remarks—Boston, Hallowell and New Market Conventions
—Methodist Episcopal General Conference of 1844—Exciting discussion on Anti-Slavery Memorials—Bishop Andrew's case—Advice of the Bishops—Plan of Division—Action of the Bishops in Andrew's case—Southern Convention—Northern Movements sketched—General Conference of the M. E. Church of 1848—Measures adopted in relation to the Church, "South"—Final issue.

To trace the far reaching impulses leading to secession, carried us back into the early history of Methodism and Slavery. Thus alone were we prepared to appreciate the result ultimately realized. A further justification of secession may be inferred fairly from a sketch of events subsequent thereto. These constitute appropriately an Appendix. The facts exhibited, will show how deep rooted was the evil of Slavery in the Methodist E. Church. So intimately associated was it, that it could not be rebuked by the Abolitionists without producing convulsions. So complete was its identity with the Church, that an implied censure of a slaveholding Bishop, by the General Conference, was succeeded by an earthquake of human wrath, which rent the entire body and divided the very heart of the system. So inseparable from its nature, was the sympathy for oppressors, that the leading influences of the Northern Church, were all exerted to allay the indignation of the South, and retain slaveholders in its embrace, with no little success. But to the facts.

The date of the Anti-Slavery secession, commenced an era in the M. E. Church, which was distinguished by events of great magnitude, seriously affecting its condition and weakening its numerical strength.

Immediately on the withdrawal of J. Horton, O. Scott and La Roy Sunderland, a meeting of the preachers in and near Boston was held, to consult on what should be done to prevent its spreading disaffection among the churches. The writer was present, not having then withdrawn from the church. It was agreed to call an Anti-Slavery Convention. Circulars were written to various parts of New England, inviting leading men in the churches.

The Convention met in Bromfield-street Church, Boston, January 18, 1843. It was the largest and most enthusiastic Anti-Slavery Convention ever held by that denomination. They voted that "slaveholding is sin, that every slaveholder is a sinner, and ought not to be admitted to the pulpit or the communion—that the M. E. Church is responsible for the existence of slavery in its pale, and finally, that nothing short of a speedy and entire separation of slavery from the

church, could satisfy the consciences of honest and faithful abolitionists; and "therefore, reformation or division is the only alternative." These positions openly taken and boldly set forth by that large and respectable Convention, produced great excitement. The necessity for that show of zeal, was, the recent secession. It is only necessary to cite a few facts on this point in proof.

The call set forth as reasons for action, "Our own reputation as Methodist abolitionists and the harmony and prosperity of the church." The Editor of Zion's Herald assigned as a reason for approving the Convention, that it was "designed to protect the Church from radical attacks." And one or more who signed the call, declared that its probable influence against secession, was the only reason for assenting to it. And the resolutions before adverted to, were passed only "in view of their latitude," said the Editor of Zion's Herald, subsequently, in an apologetic explanation.

Immediately following this, another Convention was called in Maine, to be held at Hallowell, Feb. 22. This also was largely attended, and the proceedings were marked by a boldness altogether unusual, and only indulged in and tolerated, in view of the "peculiar circumstances." They boldly affirmed, "that there are in the M. E. Church 200 travelling ministers, holding 1600 slaves; about 1000 local preachers holding 10,000; about 25,000 members holding 207,963 more." This they derived "from a careful collection of documentary evidence, with other well attested facts," as they said.

A third Convention of unusual interest, was held at New Market, New Hampshire, March 8th. In their zeal, they declared that "the only way to prevent an entire dissolution among us as a church, is an entire separation from the South," and a plan was adopted for memorializing the General Conference to divide the church, North and South, or set off the N. E. Conferences by themselves."

The intense and all pervading excitement in New England produced by these meetings, was unprecedented. Anti-Slavery addresses, counter criticisms, defenses, and miscellaneous discussion, abounded in Zion's Herald. No language was too strong, no denunciation was too severe, for the public eye on the subject of Slavery. Such were some of the results of secession. But they did not cease here. Many of those who were active in getting up the storm, wished that its fury might be expended soon. But it would not sleep.

The circulation of memorials, to be presented to the ensuing General Conference, was everywhere, attended to. Months passed away, and the period of its session arrived. It commenced May 1, 1844, in New York city.

Anti-Slavery memorials were presented in large numbers for several days, during the early part of the session. On the 6th of May, W. A. Smith, of Virginia, in alluding to these missiles said—"We know only what Methodist ministers think and feel from these memorials. They lead on the people, who, but for them, would not trouble us on this subject."

Phineas Crandall replied—"The ministers do not take the lead. The ministers do not keep pace with the members in this movement. So tardy, in their opinion, has been the action of the ministry, that some members have left the church, and more will leave, unless they move more vigorously;" i. e. secession compels our action.

J. G. Dow said—"I must correct the mistake with reference to

New Hampshire. We are driven up to it by the people; we are pushed on to this subject." So also said Wm. D. Cass. And so also re-affirmed Charles Adams, of the N. E. Conference.

At a subsequent period, on the proposition of Dr. Capers, to appoint a committee to devise a plan for "the permanent pacification of the church," on Abolition and Slavery, the following remarks were made by a member from New England, they give an explicit statement of the cause of action. They refer to the memorials against the "Black Resolution," "Slavery" and a "Slaveholding Bishop." "If those matters presented before this body by our people," said the speaker, "are not met fairly and settled according to the view our people have of what is right, they will go off from us in troops! We can't prevent it. Sir, we, at the East, are placed above a volcano. We see now and then the smoke of the volcano, issuing forth from small fissures, and it may come upon us, in all the violence of an eruption, when we are least expecting it! Our enemies (seceders) proceed upon the underground railroad plan. And the underground movement will succeed against our best endeavors. Everything depends on the General Conference." To these sentiments all seemed to agree. The necessity for action is here unequivocally asserted to be the presence and influence of secession.

In the light of these facts, we will approach the subsequent and final action of the Conference. On the 22d of May, a written statement from Bishop James C. Andrew was read, announcing the astounding fact, that he was a slaveholder, and had been for several years.

A. Griffith and J. A. Davis, of the Baltimore Conference, offered a preamble and resolution, requesting the Bishop to resign his office. This was discussed one day, and on the ensuing, J. B. Finley and J. M. Trimble offered the following:—

"Whereas, The discipline of our Church forbids the doing of anything calculated to destroy our itinerant General Superintendency; and, whereas, Bishop Andrew has become connected with Slavery by marriage and otherwise, and this act having drawn after it circumstances, which in the estimation of the General Conference, will greatly embarrass the exercise of his office as General Superintendent, if not in some places entirely prevent it; therefore,

"Resolved, That it is the sense of this General Conference, that he desist from the exercise of this office, so long as this impediment remains."

The discussion on this continued until the 81st, when Bishops Soule, Hedding, Waugh and Morris, unanimously concurred in recommending the postponement of further action until the next General Conference, in 1848. This proposition came up for consideration June 1st. Prior to June 1st, as I was informed by a delegate to the General Conference of 1848, Bishop Hedding had an interview with the N. England delegates. They assured him, that its adoption would be followed by their immediate departure for home, as they could not meet the consequences of that action in New England, if they remained. On the morrow, he withdrew his name from the proposition. Bishop Waugh took a similar course, and the matter was laid on the table by a vote of 05 to 23.

That plan was approved by the entire South, and many others. If adopted, the South would have been satisfied. It would have been adopted, had the Bishops continued of one mind. They would have agreed, but for New England. But secession was rife in New England, which prompted the course of its delegates, and another direction was thereby given to the whole affair. What that was, will now appear, and show the great ultimate result of secession.

The preamble and resolution above was adopted June 1st, by a vote of 124 to 51. H. Slocum June 3, proposed to explain the action of the Conference "as advisory only," and defer final action until 1848. This was laid on the table.

Dr. Capers, same day, proposed a plan for dividing the Connection into two General Conferences, with equal powers. This was referred to a committee.

The same afternoon Mr. Longstreet presented the following declaration, which was read by the Secretary :

"The Delegates of the Conferences in the slaveholding States, take leave to declare to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, that the continued agitation on the subject of Slavery and abolition in a portion of the Church; the frequent action on that subject in the General Conference; and, especially, the extra judicial proceedings against Bishop Andrew, which resulted on Saturday last, in the virtual suspension of him from his office as Superintendent, must produce a state of things in the South, which renders a continuance of the jurisdiction of this General Conference over those Conferences, inconsistent with the success of the ministry in the slave-holding States."

This was signed by all the Southern Delegates save one, except those of the Baltimore Conference. This declaration was referred to a Committee of nine, who were instructed if they could not "devise a plan for an amicable adjustment," to "devise, if possible, a constitutional plan for a mutual and friendly division of the church."

Three days afterwards, Henry B. Bascom read in the Conference, a protest from the Southern Delegates. The action of the Conference was called "an attempt to degrade and punish." "A lawless prosecution," "an illegal arrest," "an anomalous quasi suspension," "imperative and mandatory in form." And it called upon the majority, if their action had been misunderstood, to "explain themselves."

The opportunity was afforded the afternoon of the same day, by the presentation from Bishops Soule, Hedding, Waugh and Morris, the following questions, asking "official instruction in answer:"

1st. "Shall Bishop Andrew's name remain as it now stands in the minutes, Hymn Book and Discipline, or shall it be struck off of the official record?"

2d. "How shall the Bishop obtain his support? As provided for in the form of discipline or in some other way?"

3d. "What work, if any, may the Bishop perform; and how shall he be appointed to the work?"

To these questions the Conference replied--

1st. Bishop Andrew's name shall stand in the minutes, Hymn Book and Discipline, as formerly.

2d. The rule in relation to a Bishop and his family applies to Bishop Andrew.

31. Whether any, and if any, in what work, Bishop Andrew be employed, is to be determined by his own decision and action, in relation to the previous action of the Conference in his case."

These answers reached the case, and affirmed that he should be declared a Bishop of the M. E. Church, by "the official records," "as formerly;" that the support of "a Bishop" is his due; and finally, that Bishop Andrew may perform such work as "his own decision and action" may determine. How entirely mistaken were the South in supposing him deposed or suspended. But in order to settle this question beyond dispute, a committee was appointed to reply to the Protest, by preparing "a statement of the facts in the case of Bishop Andrew." This Committee was Drs. Olin, Durbin, & L. L. Hamlin. The first and last were afterward changed for Dr. Peck and Dr. Elliott. Their report says:

"The action of the Gen. Conference was neither judicial nor punitive. It neither achieves a deposition, nor so much as a legal suspension. Bishop Andrew is still a Bishop; and should he, against the expressed sense of the Gen. Conference, proceed in the discharge of his functions, his official acts would be valid."

Prior to this, the "Committee of nine" had reported a plan, in view of the probability of separation, between the North and South. It is inserted as an interesting document for future reference.

REPORT.

The Select Committee of nine appointed to consider and report on the Declaration of the Delegates from the Conferences of the slaveholding States, beg leave to submit the following Report:

"Whereas, a Declaration has been presented to this General Conference with the signatures of fifty-one Delegates of the body, from thirteen annual Conferences in the slave-holding States, representing, that for various reasons enumerated, the object and purposes of the Christian Ministry, and Church organization cannot be successfully accomplished by them, under the jurisdiction of this General Conference as now constituted; and whereas, in the event of a separation, a contingency to which the Declaration asks attention, as not improbable, we esteem it the duty of this General Conference to meet the emergency with Christian kindness and the strictest equity; therefore,

1. "Resolved, by the Delegates of the several Annual Conferences, in General Conference assembled, That should the Delegates from the Conferences in the slave holding States find it necessary to unite in a distinct ecclesiastical connection, the following rule shall be observed with regard to the Northern boundary of such connection: All the Societies, stations and Conferences adhering to the Church in the South, by the vote of a majority of the members of said Societies, Stations and Conferences, shall remain under the unmolested pastoral care of the Southern Church; and the ministers of the M. E. Church, shall in no wise attempt to organize Churches or Societies within the limits of the Church South, nor shall they attempt to exercise any pastoral oversight therein, it being understood that the ministry of the South reciprocally observe the same rule in relation to Stations, Societies and

Conferences adhering by vote of a majority to the M. E. Church, provided also that this rule shall apply only to Societies, Stations and Conferences bordering on the line of division, and not interior charges, which shall in all cases be left to the care of that Church within whose territory they are situate. Adopted—147 yeas—22 nays.

2. "Resolved, That ministers, local and traveling, of every grade and office in the M. E. Church, may, as they prefer, remain in that Church, or without blame attach themselves to the Church, South.— Adopted—139 yeas—17 nays.

3. "Resolved, By the Delegates of all the Annual Conferences in General Conference assembled, that we recommend to all the Annual Conferences, at their first approaching session, to authorize a change of the sixth restrictive Article, so that the first clause shall read thus: They shall not appropriate the produce of the Book Concern, nor of Chartered Fund, to any purpose other than for the benefit of the travelling, supernumerary, superannuated and worn out preachers, their wives, widows and children, and to such other purposes as may be determined on by the votes of the two-thirds of the members of the General Conference Adopted—147 yeas—12 nays.

4. "Resolved, That whenever the Annual Conferences, by a vote of three fourths of all their members voting on the third resolution, shall have concurred in the recommendation to change or alter the sixth restrictive Article, the agents at New-York and Cincinnati shall, and, they are hereby authorized and directed to deliver over to any authorized agent or appointee of the Church, South, should one be authorized, all notes and book accounts against the ministers, church members or citizens within its bounds, with authority to collect the same for the sole use of the Southern Church, and that said agents also convey to the aforesaid agent or appointee of the South, all real estate, and assign to him all the property, including presses, stock and all right and interest connected with the printing establishments at Charleston, Richmond and Nashville, which now belong to the M. E. Church.

5. "Resolved, That when the Annual Conferences shall have approved the aforesaid change in the sixth restrictive Article, there shall be transferred to the above agent of the Southern Church, so much of the capital and produce of the Methodist Book Concern as will, with the notes, book accounts, presses, &c., mentioned in the last resolution, bear the same proportion to the whole property of said concern that the Traveling Preachers in the Southern Church shall bear to all the Traveling Ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church: the division to be made on the basis, of the number of Traveling Preachers in the forthcoming minutes.

6. "Resolved, That the above transfer shall be in the form of annual payments of twenty-five thousand dollars per annum, and specifically in stock of the Book Concern, and in Southern notes and accounts due the establishment, and accruing after the first transfer mentioned above; and until all the payments are made, the Southern Church shall share in all the net profits of the Book Concern, in the proportion that the amount due them, or in arrears, bears to all the property of the concern.

7. "Resolved, That — be, and they are hereby appointed Commissioners to act in concert with the same number of Commissioners appointed by the Southern organization, (should one be formed) to estimate the amount which will fall due to the South by the preceding

rule, and to have full powers to carry into effect the whole arrangement proposed with regard to the division of property, should the separation take place. And if by any means a vacancy occurs in this Board of Commissioners, the Book Committee at New York shall fill said vacancy.

8. "Resolved, That whenever any agents of the Southern Church are clothed with legal authority or corporate power to act in the premises, the agents at New-York are hereby authorized and directed to act in concert with said Southern agents, so as to give the provisions of these resolutions a legally binding force.

9. "Resolved, That all the property of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in Meeting Houses, Parsonages, Colleges, Schools, Conference Funds, Cemeteries, and of every kind within the limits of the Southern organization, shall be forever free from any claim set up on the part of the Methodist Episcopal Church, so far as this resolution can be of force in the premises.

10. "Resolved, That the Church so formed in the South, shall have a common property in all the copyrights in possession of the Book Concerns at New-York and Cincinnati, at the time of the settlement by the Commissioners.

11. "Resolved, That the Bishops be respectfully requested to lay that part of this Report, requiring the action of the Annual Conferences, before them as soon as possible, beginning with the New-York Conference.

"ROBERT PAINE, Chairman.

"New-York, June 7, 1844."

The report having been read by the Secretary, Dr. Paine said it afforded him great pleasure to state, that notwithstanding the painful circumstances in which they had been placed, the Committee had acted with great harmony and good feeling.

Subsequent to the adjournment of the General Conference, Bishop Soule invited Bishop Andrew to preside in one or more Conferences. This was regarded by some as setting at defiance the decision of the General Conference. Such had mistaken its import, however, which was not "judicial or panitive." The official exposition of the act in Bishop Andrew's case is ably set forth by the Bishops, in the following paper, which they published as a vindication of Bishop Soule, who had been charged with doing "singly, what the General Conference and College of Bishops decided should not be done." They say—

"It is our opinion, in regard to the action of the late General Conference, in the case of Bishop Andrew, that it was designed by that body, to devolve the responsibility of the exercise of the functions of his office, exclusively on himself. In the absence of Bishop Andrew, at the time of arranging the plan of episcopal visitation, for the ensuing four years, and he not having notified us of his desire or purpose, with respect to it, we should regard ourselves as acting in contravention of the expressed will of the General Conference, if we apportioned to Bishop Andrew any definite portion thereof. But if he shall hereafter make a written application for a portion of the general oversight, we should feel ourselves justified in assigning it to

" After this paper was signed, and before the parting of the superintendents, it was agreed to make out a reserved plan of episcopal visitation, including Bishop Andrew in the apportionment of the work thereof, which was done and intrusted to the safe-keeping of Bishop Soule, with an explicit understanding, that if he should receive from Bishop Andrew a written application for his portion of the general superintendence, he was then, and in that event, to publish the second or reserved plan in immediate connection with the said application, that the reason for the substitution of the second plan might accompany its publication. Such was the action of the undersigned in the case presented, and such the ground on which it was based. At present, this is all that they feel themselves called to make public.

ELIJAH HEDDING,
B. WAUGH,
THOMAS A. MORRIS.
L. L. HAMLINE.

But the disclaimer put forth under the sanction of the Gen. Conference, their official recognition of his episcopal function, and the above admission of his claims to a plan on the "plan of episcopal visitation." were all powerless to prevent a catastrophe.

The sequel may be readily-anticipated. Before the adjournment of the General Conference, the Southern Delegates decided to call a convention to be held at Louisville, Kentucky, May 1, 1845. The Southern Annual Conferences met and appointed delegates to that Convention, which met on the above date.

Several days were spent in discussing the following resolution, which was adopted May 14, with one dissenting voice.

" Resolved by the Delegates of the several Annual Conferences in the South and South-western States, in General Convention assembled, That we cannot sanction the action of the late General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, on the subject of slavery, by remaining under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of this body, without deep and lasting injury to the interests of the church and the country; we, therefore, hereby instruct the Committee on organization, that if, upon a careful examination of the whole subject, they find that there is no reasonable ground to hope that the Northern majority will recede from their position and give some safe guaranty for the future security of our civil and ecclesiastical rights, that they report in favor of a separation from the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the said General Conference."

The following day the Committee on organization, reported the annexed resolution which was sustained by a vote of 94 to 3.

" Be it resolved by the delegates of the several Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the slaveholding States, in General Convention assembled, That it is right, expedient, and necessary to erect the annual Conferences, represented in this Convention, into a distinct ecclesiastical connection, separate from the jurisdiction of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as at present constituted; and accordingly, we, the delegates of said Annual Conferences, acting under the provisional plan of separation adopted by the General Conference of 1844, do solemnly declare the Juris-

tion hitherto exercised over said Annual Conferences, by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, entirely dissolved; and that said Annual Conferences shall be, and they hereby are constituted a separate ecclesiastical connection, under the provisional plan of separation aforesaid, and based upon the discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, comprehending the doctrines, and entire moral, ecclesiastical and economical rules and regulations of said discipline, except only in so far as verbal alterations may be necessary to a distinct organization, and to be known by the style and title of the Methodist E. Church, South."

The denomination thus formed for the better security of Methodist slave-holders, embraced two Bishop, Soule and Andrew, fifteen Annual Conferences, and 433,200 members, with 1313 ministers.

Their history I do not care to trace. The facts now given, seemed to be associated indirectly with the events already given in detail, and were, therefore, recorded.

During the interval from the General Conference of 1844, to the Louisville Convention, a highly interesting discussion was carried on in the Northern Conferences. It related to the plan of separation. Various influences combined to prevent the Annual Conference adopting the provision authorizing the Gen. Conference to appropriate to "other purposes" the funds of the Connection so as to give to the South their share of the Book Concern and Chartered Fund.

The failure of this provision excited the indignation of the South, and rather hurried than impeded the issue. The action of the Louisville Convention was not really anticipated by the Northern Church. The bold unanimity was remarkable. It was however assumed by the official papers, North, that the people would not endorse the action of the ministry. And every energy was put forth to prevent it.

This was the origin of an exciting and bitter controversy between the two sections of the church. Every inducement was held out by the official paper in New York city, to encourage the formation of fugitive societies through the South, to be attached to the Northern section of the church. But with the advantage of local influences and prejudices, it was no hard task for the South to succeed in obtaining a unanimity almost unbroken in favor of the M. E. Church, South.

In order to retain a large portion of the slaveholders on the border, every effort was made to allay their fear of being interfered with by the Abolitionists of the North. To this end it was asserted by Dr. Bond, Editor of the Christian Advocate, that they did not aim at making slaveholding a disqualification for membership.

Dr. Bond took a tour to New England, a journey of enquiry. He said in the Advocate, 1845 :

" We had learned during our visit to Providence, New England, and Maine Conferences, that the membership, as well as the more efficient and useful of the ministers, longed for repose. They were weary of the long strife of abolition controversy, and had resolved, if possible, to prevent the agitation of the subject in the churches."

* * * - *

" Upon the whole, we may confidently assure our brethren elsewhere, that no furious ultraism, no rash and impracticable measures, are to be expected hereafter from our New England brethren. We

believe, that excesses and extravagancies are as likely to be rebuked by the present sound opinions, good temper, and pious feeling of the New England ministry and membership as in any other part of the Union."

This was endorsed by the Editor of Zion's Herald. And as a guarantee of their views, the Providence Conference, of which the Editor is a member, adopted the following declarations:

(From the Christian Advocate and Journal.)

RESOLUTIONS OF THE PROVIDENCE CONFERENCE.

1. "Resolved, That we are satisfied with the discipline of the church as it is on the subject of slavery; and as we have never proposed an alteration in it, so neither do we now; and that, in connection with our brethren of the other conferences, we will ever abide by it.

2. "Resolved, That we have entire confidence in the Anti-Slavery character of our brethren of the Baltimore Conference; that we greatly rejoice that they stand, where they have ever stood, upon true Methodist ground; that we deeply sympathize with them in all their trials which have arisen out of their resolution to maintain their integrity; and that we pledge ourselves to abide by them in their support of Methodism, as transmitted to us by 'the fathers.'

A true copy,

D. PATTEN, Jr., Sec. of Con

The above resolutions were passed by a rising vote—only four votes in the negative.—SENIOR EDITOR."

The Anti-Slavery character of "our brethren of the Baltimore Conference" may be known from the following sanction of the slave trade under "peculiar circumstances," which was adopted in 1887, and is law with them now:

"That in all cases of administration under the general rule, in reference to buying and selling men, women and children, &c., it be and hereby is recommended to all committees, as the sense of this Conference, that said rule be taken, construed and understood, so as not to make the guilt or innocence of the accused to depend on the simple fact of purchase or sale of any such slave or slaves, but upon the attendant circumstances of cruelty, injustice or inhumanity, on the one hand, or those of kind purposes or good intentions, on the other, under which the transactions shall have been perpetuated; and further, it is recommended that, in all such cases, the charge be brought for immorality, and the circumstances be adduced as specifications under that charge."

A further confirmation of the remark that efforts were made to retain the slaveholders, the action of the Oneida Conference of 1845, is cited. After saying "We ask for no change in discipline or fundamental policy," it is added,

"And, finally, the sympathies of this Conference are most cordially tendered to those brethren, who, though beyond the proposed line of separation between the North and South, are still disposed to adhere

to the Methodist Episcopal Church; and we hereby pledge them any aid which circumstances may allow us to render them.

" L. A. EDDY, Secretary of Conference."

[C. A. and Journal.]

To understand fully the position of "those brethren," to whom "sympathy" is so "cordially tendered," the pastoral address of the Philadelphia Conference of 1847 is here inserted. This conference embraces part of Virginia and the whole of Delaware States, both slaveholding. It explains itself.

" PASTORAL ADDRESS

Of the Philadelphia Annual Conference of the M. E. Church, to the Societies under its care within the bounds of the Northampton and Accomac Circuits (Virginia.)

If the plan of separation gives us the pastoral care of you, it remains to inquire whether we have done anything as a conference, or as men, to forfeit your confidence and affection. We are not advised that even in the great excitement which has distressed you for some months past, any one has impeached our moral conduct, or charged us with unsoundness in doctrine, or corruption, or tyranny in the administration of discipline. But we learn that the simple cause of the unhappy excitement among you is, that some suspect us, or affect to suspect us, of being Abolitionists. Yet no particular act of the conference, or any particular member thereof, is adduced as the ground of the erroneous and injurious suspicion. We would ask you, brethren, whether the conduct of our ministry among you for sixty years past ought not to be sufficient to protect us from this charge? Whether the question we have been accustomed, for a few years past, to put to candidates for admission among us, namely, Are you an abolitionist? and without each one answered in the negative, be was not received, ought not to protect us from the charge. Whether the action of the last conference on this particular matter ought not to satisfy any fair and candid mind, that we do not desire to be abolitionists. The views and purposes of the last conference to which we refer were expressed in the words below, which we must believe have not been generally read in your community, or the apprehensions which have been so earnestly expressed would never have been entertained. The words of the conference are:—

"The Committee, to whom was referred a certain preamble and resolution on the subject of slavery and abolition, recommend the following Report:—

"That we, the members of the Philadelphia Annual Conference, are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery; but at the same time, we know our calling too well, to interfere with matters not properly belonging to the Christian ministry. We stand, in relation to slavery and abolition, where we always stood, and where we expect to stand. Walking by the same rule, and minding the same things; and ask that our action in the past may be taken as an index to our action in the future; therefore,

1 Resolved, That we will abide by the discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church as it is; and will resist every attempt to alter it in reference to slavery so as to change the terms of membership.

2. Resolved, That we sincerely deprecate all agitation of the exciting subjects which have unhappily divided the Church; and impressed with the vital importance, especially for these times, of the apostolic injunction, 'Be at peace among yourselves,' we will, as far as lies in our power, 'follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.'

Upon presenting this paper to you, in which we say, 'We stand in relation to slavery and abolition where we have always stood,' it is proper that we should remind you of the fact, that the provisions in the discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, with respect to slavery, are precisely the same, even to the very words. We cannot, therefore, see how we can be regarded as abolitionists without the ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, being considered in the same light. We must indulge the hope, that when the facts and reasonings contained in this address come to be known to you, and to those among whom you live, reflection and truth will regain their wonted ascendancy, and peace and confidence return to your afflicted community. We would also say, that there are members of this conference who have from time to time given you the most conclusive evidence, by their public acts and writings, that they are far from being abolitionists, and who with confidence and love abide in the conference of their early choice.

In conclusion, brethren, allow us to assure you of our kindest regards, our tenderest sympathy, and our earnest and continued prayers for you; and to exhort you to use forbearance and prudence in your severe trials. We have confidence that you will stand fast, and prove yourselves worthy in these your afflictions. We trust, in a short time you will have the presence, and spiritual comfort, and support of ministers, such as you have been accustomed to esteem and reverence. And being fully apprized of your difficulties, and carefully advised and admonished of their delicate and arduous duties, we doubt not but that they will satisfy you by their conduct, of our kind and upright intentions herein set forth to you.

Wishing you all heavenly benedictions, we are, dear brethren, yours, in Christ Jesus.

J. P. DURBIN,
J. KENNADY.
IGNATIUS T. COOPER.
WILLIAM H. GILDER.
JOSEPH CASTLE,

Committee.

Wilmington, Del. April 7, 1847,"

While one department of the church was presenting this aspect, another was as efficiently operating to exhibit an anti-slavery phase, and thereby retain the abolitionists. Of this class were some of the New England Conferences. The Maine Conference for 1846, declared that "slaveholding should be regarded as a flagrant breach of the general rules which require us to do no harm," &c. as slaveholding is associated with crime of the highest class." And in 1847, this conference refused to concur with the Erie Conf. resolution, to alter the general rule on slavery, because of the "thorough anti-slavery character of the constitution of the Methodist E. Church, as it is." The N. Eng-

ian Conference of 1847, said that we cannot fellowship as a Christian any slaveholder, nor acknowledge as a sister church any organization that directly permits or sanctions this sin in its members." This body gave evidence of its purpose by electing to the General Conference of 1848, several of its most radical anti-slavery members.

During the few months prior to the General Conference, which met at Pittsburgh, Pa., May 1, 1848, the Methodist press at the North was generally occupied with discussing plans for disposing of the Book Concern property, so as to give the South a portion. The first heat of intense strife having passed away, the sober second thought of most of those interested, prompted plans of compromise. Violent opposition however was made to these plans, by some.

But behind this property question, there was another, that affected the entire discussion. It was that of fellowshipping the Southern organization as a Christian Church. Originally this was no part of the issue. No single voice was heard in the General Conference of 1844, to declare it was unchristian to hold slaves under any and every circumstance. One from New Hampshire said so by mistake, but took it back next day, when Bishop Soule quoted it in some remarks. On the contrary, many voices were heard pleading equivocally but surely for slavery, by requiring that Bishops only, should not hold slaves. This was the predominant feeling among those who represented the Northern Conferences. No one said in open Conference, "Let the South go," because of her slavery. But one was heard to say, with hearty responses following, "Let New England go," because of her abolitionism. No one wept for the slave. But many wept for the oppressors, loth to let them go, and earnestly prayed heaven to prevent it.

Since that time four years have rolled by. The onward march of truth has kept pace with time. The sentiments of many who had no voice in that Conference, has struggled upward, and claimed a hearing. Unequivocal declarations found way to the Methodist public at the North, denouncing fellowship with the Methodists, South. And with such, any plan recognizing their Christianity or Methodism as genuine, was defective and impracticable. The sentiment was distinctly set forth in the reports on slavery, adopted by the New England, New Hampshire, Maine and Vermont Conferences.

The influence exerted on the General Conference and the position it assumed consequently, will be best known by sketching briefly its recent proceedings.

At the opening of the Gen. Conference in Pittsburgh, Bishop Hedding expressed himself "deeply concerned because they had great questions before them—as great as they ever had—perhaps greater than they ever had." This solicitude was responded to the first day, by a motion to appoint a committee "on the State of the Church," to consist of two from each delegation—forty-six in all. The peculiarity of the occasion, and the interests involved," were urged successfully in favor of so large a committee. Its object was stated by Dr. Durbin to be, "to gather up and harmonize views, rather than transact business."

The Committee had occasion immediately to meet and deliberate. For, on the third day of the General Conference, memorials were presented from various stations and circuits in Kentucky, Missouri and

Arkansas, asking to be supplied with pastors from the Church, North. By a singular coincidence, on the same day Dr. L. Pierce, representative of the Church, South, furnished through the president, a communication, " asking whether the General Conference was willing to receive him, and reciprocate fraternal relations with the Church, South. Dr. Pierce with Dr. Bascom and Rev. C. B. Parsons, had been appointed Commissioners by the General Conference of the Church, South, to treat on this and other subjects with their brethren of the North."

Two days after this, Dr. Peck, from the committee on the state of the Church, reported the following preamble and resolution :

" Whereas, a letter from Rev. L. Pierce, D. D., delegate of the Methodist E. Church, South, proposing fraternal relations between the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist E. Church, South, has been presented to this Conference, and whereas there are serious questions and difficulties existing between the two bodies ; therefore,

" Resolved, That while we tender to the Rev. Dr. Pierce all personal courtesies, and invite him to attend our sessions, this General Conference does not consider it proper, at present, to enter into fraternal relations with the Methodist E. Church, South.

(Signed)

G. Peck, Ch'n.*

" But to prevent the supposition that Dr. Pierce's slaveholding, or his relation to a slaveholding Church, was any barrier to the most intimate fellowship, Dr. Peck added,

" But, on all hands, by all the speakers, the kindest expressions were used in relation to our respected friend and brother Dr. Pierce, as a man, as a christian, and a christian minister, the committee were prepared to accord to him all due respect."

* The editor of Zion's Herald, in his own columns, and on the General Conference floor, insisted that the " Serious questions" in the preamble, referred to Slavery. This was disclaimed by others at the time of its adoption. Subsequently, the Southern papers quoted this construction of the language as an argument at the South; whereupon Dr. Peck, who was Chairman of the Committee that reported the language referred to, now editor of the Christian Advocate, New-York city, denied, most unequivocally, that it had any such application, or was properly construed to mean anything about Slavery.

The difficulty was two elements were at war. The anti-slavery and the pro-slavery parties in the M. E. Church, each aimed to construe it as best suited the latitude of their location. But the most palpable evidence of a fraternal feeling, between these Southern champions' of Slavery and their Northern allies, is given by the editor of the Pittsburgh Advocate, in his daily of May 9, 1848. Speaking of the services on the previous Sabbath, he says—

" At the close of the sermon, the venerable Bishop Hedding commenced the solemn services of the Lord's Supper, and after singing a hymn, descended from the pulpit, and affectionately invited Bishop Soule, (senior Bishop of the M. E. Church, South,) who was in the congregation, to kneel with him at the sacramental-table. All differences were, for the moment, forgotten, and we felt, indeed, that we were come, in spirit, in the words of the text, 'unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem.' Bishop Hedding gave vent to the deep emotions of his soul in expressions of heavenly joy and living faith.

The first two tables were occupied by preachers, of which there were large numbers present, and among whom we rejoiced to see Dr. Pierce, of Georgia; and while the venerable fathers' of the Church, waited upon these devoted men, a holy union rested upon the assembly of God's people."

This report was amended on motion of Dr. Tomlinson, by adding,

"Provided, however, that nothing in this resolution shall be so construed as to operate as a bar to any propositions from Dr. Pierce, or any other representative of the Methodist E. Church, South, towards the settlement of existing difficulties between that body and this."

The next day, May 6, a motion was made and prevailed, admitting Dr. Pierce within the bar of the Conference; and the Dr. was by vote furnished with a copy of this resolution. Thus off-setting practically their previous action.

The next step in the proceedings of this Committee, was the presentation of the following report:

"The committee on the state of the Church, respectfully beg leave to present a further report, in part, and to recommend to the General Conference the adoption of the following resolution:—

"Resolved, That the Bishops of the Methodist E. Church be, and they are hereby respectfully requested to furnish to this Gen. Conference, a statement in writing of the instances in which they consider that the plan contingently provided by the last General Conference has been violated by the authorities of the Methodist E. Church, South, by sending ministers, and organizing societies within the bounds of the territory of this Conference.

Respectfully submitted.

GEO. PECK, Chairman,

The indications thus far promised so little for the South, that Dr. Pierce addressed the General Conference as follows:

"To the Bishops and Members of the General Conference of the M. E. Church.

REV. AND DEAR BRETHREN—I have received two extracts from your journal of the 4th and 5th inst. From these extracts I learn you decline recognizing me in my proper character as the accredited delegate of the M. E. Church, South, and only invite me to a seat within the bar, as due to me on account of my private and personal merits. These considerations I shall appreciate, and will reciprocate them with you in all the private walks of christian and social life. But within the bar of the General Conference I can only be known in my official character.

You will therefore regard this communication as final, on the part of the M. E. Church, South. She can never renew the offer of fraternal relations between the two great bodies of Wesleyan Methodists in the United States. But the proposition can be renewed at any time, either now or hereafter, by the M. E. Church. And if ever made upon the basis of the Plan of Separation, as adopted by the General Conference of 1844, the Church, South, will cordially entertain the proposition.

With sentiments of deep regret, and with feelings of disappointed hope, I am yours, in christian fellowship.

L. PIERCE.

Delegate from the M. E. Church, South

Pittsburgh, May 9, 1848."

Accompanying this were his credentials as a delegate from the General Conference of the Methodist E. Church, South.

After this a series of resolutions were adopted on the presentation of a report on the memorials before named, affirming : First—The General Conference has no power to effect, authorize, or sanction, a division of the Church—yeas 140, nays 2. Second—Membership in the Church can only be forfeited by a violation of its rules—yeas 140, nays 6. Third—Any act of the Church otherwise separating members from it, contravenes their constitutional rights and privileges—yeas 142, nays 6. Fourth—The report of the Select Committee of nine, adopted by the last General Conference for reasons specified in detail, is hereby declared null and void—yeas 133, nays 9.

The final action was had on this subject, on Monday May 29, on motion of D. Curry and M. Simpson. In substance this : Whereas the proposed change in the sixth restrictive rule has not been concurred in, and whereas the thirteen Conferences in the slaveholding States have formed a separate connection, and appointed three commissioners to present and adjust their claim on the fund of the Book Concern of the Methodist E. Church, and whereas we desire an amicable adjustment of this difficulty, therefore, resolved, First—To authorise the Book Agents to submit said claims to arbitration, if consistent with their corporate powers ; yeas 74, nays 70. Second—if not consistent therewith, and a suit at law is commenced by the South, said agents are authorized to offer an adjustment by a legal arbitration, under the authority of the court ; yeas 96, nays 47. Third—if no suit is commenced it was recommended to the Annual Conferences so far to suspend the sixth restrictive rule, so as to authorize the Book Agents to submit said claims to arbitrators ; yeas 100, nays 42.

After the adjournment of the General Conference at Pittsburgh, distinguished legal gentlemen were consulted on the propriety of submitting the masters, at issue, to arbitration, as instructed. The opinion, however, was unfavorable. The Commissioners of the Church, South, were informed, by those acting for the Book-room at New-York, that it was deemed beyond the precincts of their corporate power. Immediately following this announcement, by authority, the Commissioners, of the Church. South, commenced preparations for a legal suit, for their share of the property, held in trust for the M. E. Church, in the United States of America.

Thus far, has the finger of time pointed out the events subsequent to secession, and, to some extent, dependent thereupon.. The future is unknown. Yet coming time will show still greater things than these, in relation to the great struggle traced in these pages, between the contending elements of freedom and slavery. To narrate the facts, without assuming to explain their philosophy, has been the aim of the writer. Having arrived at the last in the series, thus far developed, the author concludes without further remarks ; presuming that the reader is as much pleased to lay down the book, as he is to put aside the pen.